MEDA:

A TALE OF THE FUTURE.

AS RELATED BY

KENNETH FOLINGSBY.

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UTOPIA

PREFACE.

"MEDA: a Tale of the Future," was written during the year 1888. Some friends having seen the MS. expressed a desire to have printed copies. To gratify the wishes of these indulgent readers this little book has been printed. If a copy should by chance fall into the hands of any "outside friendship's pale," the author would crave mercy at their hands.

INTRODUCTION.

HOW curious are the incidents that occur in all lives, and how often is it that the most important amongst them may take its rise in the merest trifle!

In looking backward on a life's history we find that our most important actions have been influenced and our life's path determined by an accident.

Like the waters of some little spring situated on an elevated ridge of ground dividing two valleys, a twig, a stone, a growth of herbage may direct their course into one valley or the other, this accident making this spring perhaps the fountain head of a great river flowing down the valley that leads to the south; while, had this accidental obstruction been placed on the other side, its waters would have been delivered into the other valley and thus caused to flow in an entirely opposite direction.

When we come to think of it, a spring and river would be a not inapt illustration of the source of life and life's stream. From life's first dawn it must flow onward and onward without ceasing, its course at one time or another being diverted by the twig, the stone, or the herbage of life's accidents. So it continues its way, now winding, twisting, and buffeting with rocks and crags, while in yonder pool it is calm, peaceful, and placid, yes, and too often stagnant, while anon we hear it moan and groan in agony, as it rushes into some death-like cavern of sorrow, after a time to arise again in sportive joy, and meander through the lovely valley of pleasure further down.

It is ever changing, yet ever falling, until it arrives at that boundless ocean of death—the common receiver of all streams of life—no matter what their origin or course may have been.

It was a slight incident in my life that led me to discover the contents of one of life's caverns, that proved of the greatest interest to me, and which, I think, may possibly also interest others.

I was walking near a large manufacturing city in a district well in the country and full of pretty villas, when I noticed a tall delicate-looking man in front of me. He walked with the assistance of a stick, and had evidently just recovered from a serious illness, for he seemed to get along with great difficulty. I thought he was about to faint, and, rushing forward, I caught hold of him, thinking he would fall. He turned his face, and looking at me said, "Thank you, friend; I am very feeble, and shall be much obliged, if you will kindly assist me to my home, which is not far off." While slowly walking along, holding my arm, he continued;—I have just recovered from a very curious and serious illness. Feeling better this morning, I thought I was strong enough to venture for a short turn outside my own garden, but alas! my estimate of my strength was too high. I had only got a short way,

To S. M. J. King
with the Authors
Best wishes
19th July 1892

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when I discovered my mistake and turned, and, kind friend, had it not been for your timely aid, I most certainly would have fallen."

My new friend was a man of about forty years with very deep-set thoughtful eyes. They were those dreamy, interesting dark eyes that seem to speak as they look at you. There was something very pleasing in his expression, and something very kindly and truthful in his manner, that made me take to him at once, and by the time we reached his house, I felt as though he were an old and tried friend. On arriving at his gate, he insisted on my going in, saying that he was sure his wife would be pleased to see me. I somehow felt I would like to know more about him, and gladly accepted his invitation. I found his wife to be a pleasant looking woman of about thirty-five. She was hunting about the garden for him, and hailed his appearance with a good-natured scolding. By way of explanation, she said, "You see, sir, I left him sitting on that seat, while I went in to look after the house and servants, and when I came out again, I found he had flown. I thought some spirits had come," she said laughing, "and carried him away with them, since of late he thinks so much about them. But I now know, my dear Kenneth," she continued looking at him, "that you were just tired of your old wife, and thought you were strong enough to do without her help, and this is the result." "There now," said my friend, still holding my arm, "just you hear how my dear Mary can scold; she is a cruel woman, and has been very hard on me, telling me that ever since my illness, my head has been brimful of the greatest nonsense. But, my dear sir, it is no nonsense. I have been privileged to see strange things in spite of all my dear wife says."

I got him seated in his garden, and we three became very friendly. I lived not far from my new friends, and visited them almost every day, as I took a great interest in the invalid. During my visits he repeatedly hinted at what he had seen, but if his wife were present she would hold up her finger as a warning to me not to encourage him to talk about this mystery, whatever it was. I must say I began to grow very curious. His wife seemed to think that there was something wrong with his mind, from the effects of his illness. But this was not the case, the man's mind was as sound in all respects as my own. I found his name to be Kenneth Folingsby. He was an artist of no mean ability, in fact his pictures were sought after, and fetched large prices. He was well-to-do, and had a very nice house. He was a man who thought it his duty to try to elevate the intellectual standard of the working classes, and he devoted most of his evenings, when in health, to the furtherance of this object. Being a Conservative in politics, he espoused that cause with great earnestness, because he believed it to be the best for the people; and I found that it was during an election contest, throughout which he had worked almost without ceasing, that he had contracted his illness. His party would he feared be defeated, and whether it was from fear of this, or from some other cause I can't say, but after the result became evident, he fell ill.

When talking with him one day during his wife's absence, he said;—"My dear friend, I have often hinted to you that I had seen some strange things. My dear wife thinks when I tell her of them that my mind is deranged, but I am as sane as any living man, and I hope some day to be able to commit all my curious adventures to paper. But while we artists are very quick with the brush, we are but poor scribes. I feel if I were to attempt to write the recollections of my adventures in my present state of health that I should undoubtedly break down; and if I broke down, I might never again be able to resume the work the performance of which I feel to be a duty to mankind."

I had become more and more interested in this man and his mystery, and being a good shorthand writer I offered to take down all his experiences in shorthand, and then transcribe them for him. To this he at once assented, and though his wife, on hearing of our compact, at first objected, yet she came to see that it was better that her husband should get this weight off his mind, as he felt that he would not fully recover until he had done so. I was glad I had carried my point, and at once began what was to me a most pleasant and interesting task.

It was about two months after I first met Folingsby, that on a fine summer afternoon we were seated under a tree in his pleasant little garden. The air was still to a degree, not a sound could be heard save the humming of a bee, or the chirping of the birds in the trees over our heads. My friend, still weak from his late illness, was lounging in an easy chair, while I was seated beside a garden table with my note book in hand ready to take down his words. Folingsby looked very solemn when he began, saying by way of introduction :—

"This is a strange, a very strange story that I am going to relate to you. Like my dear wife Mary, you may think it all the outcome of my fancy. But I can assure you that its reality is to me too patent, and that it is too distinctly impressed on my memory for me ever to allow any one to make light of my conviction of its truth. I believe that I have been allowed to see into futurity for some good purpose, and I feel that should I neglect to commit my recollections of what I have seen to writing that I should fail in my duty to posterity."

Heaving a sigh, he began a narrative that took me many days to transcribe. It ran as follows:—

PART I.

AS you are aware I am an artist. My profession has brought me into close contact with nature in all its grandeur, in all its beauty, and in all its purity. I have spent months and months in solitudes, far, far away from what is called civilisation, yes, far away from cities, towns and villages. Ah! these were indeed days of pleasure. It was in these solitudes that I was able to grasp, if but in a small degree, the goodness of the Creator and the beauty of His works. While I saw the grand effects of landscape; while I saw the flitting gleams of beauty caused by a dash of sunshine breaking through the clouds; while I saw the vast mountains raising their mighty heads above me; while I saw the mirror-like lake below me; while I saw the plants, the mosses, the lichens, all full of silent beauty; while I heard the skylark's charming note enchanting my ears with sweet melody as he floated warbling above his nest; while I saw the bees all busy gleaning their winter's stores; while I saw the butterflies decked with all their radiant beauty, I could not help thinking how different was this ever varying scene of love, harmony, and contentment, with the city-created dens of iniquity,—the great haven and boasted creation of so-called civilized man.

After many years of pleasure and activity in pursuit of my profession, I bethought me that I was not doing my duty to my fellows in avoiding city life I felt that I was living in selfishness, if I did not endeavour to do something for the advantage of mankind, and, knowing as I did the degraded life that the majority of city people lived, I determined to try my powers of reforming.

Being of an enthusiastic nature, I set to work in this vast city of ours, labouring early and late, spending all the time I could spare in this work of attempted reform. At first my enthusiasm led me to think I was making progress, but alas! all I was able to do amounted to very little indeed. I redoubled my efforts, but while undoubtedly some good had come out of my work there was so much to do, and I was so earnest, that I overtasked my strength. I became weak and excitable, and at last I had to give way to nature. My strength failed me; I took ill; and was confined to the house for months. Getting rather better I was foolish enough to enter into an election contest, supporting the faction I thought best. Of the hard work I went through during this contest I remember very little. Before the election I became ill again, lost consciousness, and knew nothing more of politics or of the result of the contest, until I awoke from a trance now fully four months ago. But while I was not conscious of what had been doing in this world, you will see from what follows, that I was fully occupied both in mind and body.

I appeared to have fallen into a trance-like slumber; I thought I was walking beside a slow flowing tidal river with banks so regular that I was almost led to think I was walking alongside a canal, but so far as I could see, there was no tow-path, and no sign of vessels or barges moving on it. It was a lovely, bright, fresh, and warm day. The change of scene to me after my anxiety and worry was quite refreshing, and I felt perfectly contented and happy. I seemed to move about without any apparent exertion, barely touching the earth, and if any obstacle came in my way I surmounted it in the most offhand manner. I saw a great mound on the banks of the river at a considerable distance, and began to think how I could get over it; but I reached it in a few seconds, and walked right over it without any difficulty. My movements reminded me more of flying than walking. When I descended to the level again, I saw the river flowing towards me in an almost straight line, and in the distance I beheld what to me seemed the ruins of a great city. So clear was the atmosphere that I could pick out many prominent buildings, some with square towers, some with spires, and some with domes. It occurred to me that I had seen these buildings before somewhere, but my recollections of them and of the general aspect of the city, while in some respects familiar to my mind, were so indistinct that I thought I was looking on some continental city that I had seen when a child. My curiosity being aroused, I sped on my way in the direction of the great city, following the banks of the river, which were completely overgrown by peculiar looking grass and weeds. As I got nearer, I found the banks of the stream encumbered by the remains of old brick and stone buildings, most of which were overgrown by creepers and grass, and in some places these ruins formed large mounds that indicated the existence in ages past of great edifices.

While I felt exhilarated and happy to a degree, there was something terribly lonely about my walk. It is true I saw an occasional fish leap in the water, and some small beasts like hares and rabbits started out of the heaps of stones as I passed them, but the very presence of this wild animal life amidst the ruins made me more lonely, causing me to wonder where I could be, and to consider why such a fair and lovely district should apparently be destitute of the human race. I went on wondering what had caused this devastation. Had there been an earthquake? Had the people been stricken down by a plague? Had the country been invaded by a foreign foe, who without mercy slew man, woman, and child, leaving no one to perpetuate the race that must have existed years ago? Yes, a nation that had erected all these great buildings that now were mere heaps of ruins overgrown by the vegetation of ages, must surely have some descendants if they were not annihilated. As I got nearer and nearer to the city, my astonishment became more and more intense. I suddenly came upon the remains of a great bridge, the piers of which were of enormous dimensions, and must have been formed of iron, built in with stone and cement, the upper structure being of granite, a great portion of it still stood, but not a trace of the iron or steel girders could be seen. The concrete work that formed the base was also in wonderful preservation, but there was not a trace of the cast iron cylinders that had formerly been the outer shell of the piers. Curiously enough the concrete retained the impression of every plate, and every flange, and every bolt, but all the ironwork had disappeared. As I stood and looked at this old bridge, the thought occurred to me—"What a story you could tell, if you only had the power of speech!" It was clear to me that all the steel and iron girders, and the cast iron pier cylinders, had gradually corroded away. I could trace in my mind the entire processes of gradual destruction through many ages: first, the people by some miserable calamity disappeared; then, the ironwork of the bridge would corrode for want of care; the girders would weaken gradually and sag down in the centre, not being able to carry their own weight; the upper member would buckle up, and the whole structure would fall into the river dragging the upper portion of the piers with it. Then the oxidation would continue; and that great structure is probably now a deposit of red oxide in the bottom of the stream, or it has been carried in minute particles to the ocean. This, I came to the conclusion, must have been a high level bridge, as the piers when perfect could not have been less than 100 feet above the water level.

On I went, taking a lively interest in all I saw, and having the same exhilarating feeling encouraging me to proceed. No trace of fatigue, no hunger troubled me, as I continued my tripping walk. I now came to what must have been a great harbour or dock. All the quays were covered by the ruins of buildings, many of which had fallen right across the roadway; but, in some cases, the buildings had fallen as it were into themselves, forming a heap of stone over-grown by weeds and scrub. You could trace the lines of the streets by these long heaps of stones, and it was evident from their regularity that this city must have been built in blocks, and that the houses, to judge from the heaps of ruins, must have been of a considerable height. Further along I came to more docks nearly filled with silt and stones, and more bridges, that had been constructed of iron with stone piers, similar to the great high level bridge that first met my vision. As in the other, the ironwork had completely disappeared, but a portion of the masonry still remained. Further up the river I saw what appeared to be the remains of a stone bridge. As I was anxious to get to the other side to examine some buildings that still stood there towering above the heaps of ruins, I hurried along, and when I reached the bridge I found that, although in a very dilapidated condition, it was in a sufficiently good state of preservation to allow me to pass over. So over I went, and wending my way about ruined streets with here and there a strong heavily built wall still standing, I came to an embankment across. On examining this, I found it must have been a high level railway, as many portions of the brick arches, in a sad state of decay, could be seen peeping through the rank herbage that covered them. When I had climbed the embankment, I could see the whole of the city. Not far off were the remains of a great building that probably had been the Municipal Chamber or Courts of Justice; then, there were the remains of churches; here, a tower, and there, a spire, with great stone columns and parts of walls. Such was the scene that met my eyes in all directions, but everything was overgrown with vegetation, and everything seemed to be decayed. No traces of ironwork existed, while the evidence of great iron structures having been there in ages past and gone were visible at every step. I followed the track of the railway for a long time through the ruined city, till I came to what evidently was the terminus, now reduced to a great pile of stones. Some pieces of the wall were still standing, and showed that the building had been highly decorated with carved stone-work; but the details of the carving had been worn away by the rubbings of time. I clambered to the top of the wall, and lying down on the grass-grown parapet, began to ponder as to where I was, what city this could have been—what had caused such devastation—why it was now deserted? How could I get information? I had all my life made a hobby of antiquarian research, but had never read or heard of such modern-looking antiquities as I now saw before me. Could it be that I had got into another planet whose inhabitants had anticipated all our civilization by thousands of years, but who through luxurious living, and over-quickened intellect, had so reduced their bodily strength, that they gradually died out, leaving all in the possession of wild animals; or could it be that I had died thousands of years ago, and that I had just been born again, and now saw my own planet after it had undergone the changes of ages; or had the power of some mysterious being so influenced me, and so cleared my vision, as to enable me to see into futurity, and view the world as it would be thousands of years hence? These and hundreds of other thoughts racked my brain; but while I pondered and thought, anxious to learn all about this ruined city, my wonder and anxiety did not bring any weariness or languor with it. On the contrary, there was a brightness and buoyancy in all my thoughts. They were acute and searching to a degree; but what astonished me most was the fact, that while I must have been travelling for many hours, I could not say that I was the least fatigued, nor had I the slightest feeling of hunger or thirst. When I lay down, it was not from any need of rest, but simply out of a desire to enjoy a stretch on the soft-looking grass-grown top of the ruined wall. How long I lay in this position I cannot tell; I was so comfortable that I could have lain there for ages. My body hardly felt the bed of grass on which I lay; in fact, I apparently was so light that the grass supported me on its tips, and never allowed my body to come into contact with the harder substance below. I must say this surprised me beyond measure, and to test the accuracy of my position, I passed my hands from either side under my body. This I found I could do without any difficulty. Then it occurred to me, that I must be a shadow; but this was not so, for when I pinched my leg to see if such was the case, I caused myself more pain than I counted on. I felt the grass with my fingers to ascertain if it was very stiff and strong, but it felt like ordinary grass, and my fingers broke it easily. Then I came to the conclusion that I must have grown very light, while at the same time I apparently retained all my bulk. I had no mirror to examine my face, but my hands, arms, legs and feet looked just the same as they always were. Well, as I said before, how long I remained in this position I cannot tell, but my desire to see more of these curious ruins caused me to stand erect and look over the edge of the wall, and there, in the centre of what must have been an open space or square, I saw something moving about in the midst of smoke or haze. This haze so obscured the object I was looking at, that I could not make out what it was, but that it was moving was an absolute certainty. After watching it for a long time, the mist seemed to lift, enabling me to see distinctly two men walking together. They were the very oddest looking pair of mortals I had ever seen. In stature they were very diminutive, but they had large heads out of all proportion to their bodies. They were walking away from me, and being most anxious to meet them, and to find out where I was, I hailed them loudly.

The effect of my cry astonished me, for, whether it was the clear atmosphere, or the desolation of the ruined city, my voice sounded like thunder. But if it had a curious effect on me, the effect it had on the two individuals I hailed, was marvellous. They first of all fell flat on the ground as if stunned, then they sprang up with wonderful agility, bounding several feet into the air, and turning around, looked in amazement toward me, singing out in piping childish voice some words that I could not understand. I beckoned them to come nearer to me, and speaking, as I thought, in a whisper, asked "Who are you ?" They came nearer, and looked at me in astonishment. Now that I could see them better, and thinking I should like to get quite close to them, I stepped off the wall in the most reckless way, never noticing that I had a leap of thirty feet to make. But somehow I came down beside my little oddities without the slightest inconvenience, save that on alighting, I rebounded into the air at least twenty feet, and had to take a dozen hops, before I could settle on the earth, and talk, or try to talk, to my new acquaintances, if such I might call them.

At last, when like a rubber ball I had expended all my elastic energy and come to rest, I carefully scrutinized this odd looking couple. They were not more than four feet high, with very large heads, and small bodies and limbs. That portion of the body which contains the principal organs of digestion seemed to be almost entirely awanting, but their chests were more than fairly well developed. For clothing they wore a wrapping of a white silky material, bound closely round the body, and forming a kind of kilt around the upper portions of their limbs. On their feet they had light shoes, and to each ankle was secured a circular weight of considerable size, formed of a metal which looked like newly scraped lead. Each weight was in two pieces, bound together by a silken cord let into a circular recess, near the top. On their heads there was no covering, and the little hair they had was fine in texture, and of a dark brown colour. It formed a slight fringe from the temples round the back of the head, and when viewed from the head behind strongly resembled an egg in a brown-edged egg-cup.

Their eyes had a bright, far-seeing look, wistful and dreamy withal, pale grey in colour, and very prominent. There was a sad, thoughtful look on their faces that made me feel that nothing I could say would induce them to laugh. The features were marked, and the skin was clear almost to transparency. Judging from the baldness of their heads and the solemnity of their mien, I would have said they were about seventy years old, but, judging from their limbs and the appearance of their skin, I would have guessed their age at twenty to twenty-five. In fact they were very grave, diminutive, young old men of some new type of humanity unknown to my experience.

Although it has taken me a long time to describe what I have done and seen, since I first saw these individuals, it only occupied a few moments. Then in case I should frighten them I began by asking in a whisper: "Where am I? What ruined city is this? Who are you? Why don't you speak? Don't be frightened; I won't harm you." This last exclamation was drawn from me by the horrified look I noticed on their faces. I feared they were going to take flight and leave me alone—a state of matters I did not wish. As I was determined to get some information as to the locality I was in, I looked as pleasant and harmless as I could, but it was quite evident that they were anxious to get away, and it was also clear, that they did not understand a word I said to them. I began to make signs to get them to speak, but it was no use. At last one of them made some remarks in a language that was quite unknown to me, although I am well versed in nearly all modern languages. I spoke to them in English first, then in German, then in Russian and Italian, but without success. At last I thought I would try and put together my few words of Latin, and see if they could understand it. To my delight, this last resource brought greater success. I saw they partially understood what I was saying, and so I began again —"Where am I?" and they replied, "In

Scotonia." Then I asked them,—"To what nation do you belong?" and received as reply, "We are Scotonians." Again I inquired, "Of what city are these the ruins?" To this last question I could get no reply. They put their fingers on their lips, and after a short consultation, began to move off, making signs for me to follow. We went on slowly for some time; then, they both suddenly stopped, and unfolding a part of their kilt-like garment, uncovered a pocket into which they put their hands, and threw out a quantity of small gravel, meanwhile holding on by the branch of a shrub. I could not understand what this meant at first; but I soon found out, for, no sooner did they loose their hold of the shrub than they began to trip along at a rattling speed. It was now evident to me that they had been discharging ballast. "These people must be a description of animated balloon," I thought to myself, "and now that they are light they will try to get away from me." I was not going to be left behind, and so the faster they went, the harder I followed them, keeping close on their heels. Every now and then, I saw the facial side of one of the animated eggs turn round and solemnly glare at me, at the same time beckoning me to continue following. The sight of them was too ridiculous—what between the big heads and the prominent liquid grave-looking eyes, and the little bits of legs taking prodigious strides, and spinning along over stones and brushwood at a speed of at least ten miles an hour, I felt strangely amused. And then, here was I following in the wake of these elf-like mortals without any apparent difficulty. Indeed I was so highly amused with my adventure, that I burst out into a great loud laugh, the effect of which was to cause my guides to grasp hold of the branch of a tree, and to shake with terror. When I saw the result of my mirth, I was truly sorry that I had been so imprudent, and in the best Latin I could command apologised for my rudeness. At this, they began to regain courage, and each picking up a stone, as I found to act as ballast, they now began to move forward with more caution, making signs for me to follow. The slow pace at which we were now proceeding, enabled me to look around, and see in what direction we were moving in relation to the ruined city. I found we were still within the skirts of the ruins, and I could still see the towers and spires that first attracted my attention. After walking slowly for about half-an-hour, I noticed that we were approaching an elevated and highly cultivated part of the country that was surmounted by a low stone building of considerable size, like a fortification without any embrasures or armament. We soon arrived at the front of this building, where I noticed a large bronze door provided with a heavy knocker. My guides knocked at the door, giving three distinct raps and a succession of light taps. It may appear curious that I should follow with such implicit trust, but I did so. I felt no fear. I was prepared as soon as the door opened to go in, no matter what the consequences might be.

In a few seconds the great door swung open, and I entered close on the heels of my guides. I looked to see who had opened it, but could see no sign of anyone. When we had entered, it closed as quietly as it had opened, but not a soul was visible. This proved to be a gate in the outer wall, and when we passed it, we suddenly came in sight of a great hollow, and we had to go down by steps toward a large building that stood in the centre. We now saw several figures moving about in the space that surrounded the building. My guides went up to one of these, who was evidently very old, as his scant supply of hair was white as snow. The three conversed together for fully five minutes in some unknown tongue, during which time, my guides were evidently recounting in their grave matter-of-fact way the extraordinary adventure they had had with the stranger they brought with them. The sage took from his pocket a plate of bright metal about four inches square, and by means of a short pointed metal pin he scratched with wonderful rapidity what I felt was a full and true description of the curious stranger. He then placed it on a little square stool that stood on the ground near him, put his finger on a button, and it was immediately carried or spirited away towards the building. He then deliberately came up to me, first looking at my face with a long intent rude stare, then he walked three times round me, surveying my back, front and sides, but never opening his lips. I began to wonder what would come next, when I heard a slight clank on the stool, and there lay a bright plate similar to the one that he had sent away a few seconds previously. The sage advanced and lifted the plate, which evidently contained the reply to his message. Having read it he came up to me, and addressed me in Latin, thus: "What are you?" I replied "A Man." At this answer he smiled and said, "You mean you are an antiquated specimen of an extinct race!" This put me on my mettle, and made me feel inclined to give him the benefit of an antiquated answer that would not have been very complimentary, but he went on :—

"Where do you come from ?"

"From Great Britain," I replied.

At this he smiled again in a provoking way, and said :—

"Do you seriously say so ?"

It was as much as I could do to restrain myself, but prudence gained the day. I just clenched my fist, and said to myself, "You might kill the poor creature, so keep your temper, and see the fun out."

He then said, "Your Name ?"

And I replied, "Kenneth Folingsby."

Here he looked me hard in the face and said, "What is your profession ?"

An Artist," I replied.

"You are quite sure that all you have told me is profound truth ?"

"All profound truth," I replied.

Then he said, "Advance under the charge of your guides!" and sitting down on the message stool, placed his elbow on his left knee, rested his chin on his hand, and looked at me in such a comical incredulous way that I could scarcely keep from laughing. My two guides passed along in the same noiseless gliding fashion as before, and led me towards the central building.

On my way across the vacant space, I could do nothing but reflect on the curious adventure in which I was engaged. Everything was so novel and so ethereal, that I began to think that death must have overtaken me, and that my spirit was passing through that land which some say intervenes between earth and heaven. Still this could not be the case, as the city and country through which I had passed was in some way or other familiar to me, although the city and the river bank had the decay of ages stamped on them. Whilst in the midst of these meditations, I arrived with my guides at the door of the great central building. This door, like that in the outer wall, was bronze, and was provided with a knocker after the same pattern, but of much less dimensions. One of my guides lifted the knocker, and gave a single tap: immediately the door swung open, and we entered a large square hall, the walls of which were formed of great slabs of white marble.

Here we were met by another sage who was seated on what I have termed a message stool. In his hand he held a metal plate which I have no doubt was that on which the first sage wrote the description of me. He consulted his plate from time to time, looking at me to see that this message was correct. Being satisfied of its accuracy he made a sign to my guides, and they at once retired, the door closing behind them. As soon as we were alone, he came up to me and took me by the hand. This was the first time one of these creatures actually touched me. The sensation I experienced, when our hands came into contact, was most peculiar. I cannot describe it better than by saying, that it was a pleasant kind of gruesome feeling that seemed to tingle through every nerve, muscle, and bone of my body. It did not come in jerks, but in a steady continuous flow, that, although awesome, was exceedingly pleasant. When he released my hand from his grasp, I felt relieved, but at the same time sorry. It was that sort of sorrowful feeling that is experienced when by some accident one is stopped just in the act of doing something wrong, but pleasant. Sage Number Two now addressed me in Latin, asking me exactly the same questions as Sage Number One had done, but finding that I spoke Latin with much difficulty, he said, "What is your native tongue?" I replied, "English." At this he seemed perplexed, but after a moment's thought, he said, "I will send for one versed in extinct tongues." Thereupon he produced a metal plate, on which he wrote something, and placing it on the stool, touched the button, the plate disappearing as before. Now, the hall in which we stood was completely closed in. All the doors were shut, and where the light came from I could not say, but it was as bright as day. I could see no wires or telephonic connections, and to me the mystery was, how did that plate get out of the hall. I was evidently in the land of marvels, and could only wait with patience for explanations. I had not much time to ruminate, as almost immediately a door in the other end of the hall opened, and there entered a stately-looking old man whose appearance struck me as being very pleasing. He was much taller than any of the other specimens of this new race that I had seen, being about five feet eight inches high. His head, like those of the others, was abnormally large, but there was only a very slight bald patch on the crown, and there was an abundance of flowing white locks, and a long white beard. His features, too, were beautifully chiselled, and his eyes were bright and luminous. His skin was almost transparent, and I imagined I could see right through and through him. His dress was much the same as that of the others, but the material of which it was made was finer in texture.

He came up to me with the plate in his hand, and looked intently at me. After conversing with Sage Number Two for a short time, he turned to me, and taking me by the hand, I experienced the same sensation as before, but much more intensely. The pleasure of the feeling almost made me faint. He dropped my hand, and said in pure English, "You speak ancient English." I replied that he must have been misinformed, as I spoke modern English, possibly with a slight Scotch accent. He smiled (a most pleasant smile it was) and said, "I fear, my friend, you do not understand *modern* English. Did you understand the language your guides spoke? I see from your expression you did not. Well, that is modern English."

At this remark I could not help laughing, my previous experiences causing me to do so very quietly. He laughed also, but his laughter was very subdued, as was his voice.

At last I found enough breath to say, "My dear sir, this is the year of our Lord 1888, and the language I speak is the English spoken in 1888. Could you possibly get anything more modern than that?"

He gazed at me with admiration, his eyes and features beaming with delight, and ejaculated,—"Oh! this is a reward! This is a treasure worth a life's labour on earth! What a glorious, what a magnificent specimen of extinct man you are!" And with this the dear old fellow skipped round the hall with wonderful agility for one of his years, and coming up to me again, said:—

"This is not the year of our Lord 1888, my friend, but it is the year of our Lord 5575."

My mental observation at that moment was, "This dear old thing is mad! They all are mad! I must be mad too!" I clasped my head in my hands, and swung to and fro in a state of intense mental agony. "5575!" My agony was so great that I exclaimed aloud, "I am Mad! Mad! Mad!" and was about to swoon away, when he took hold of my hand, permeating me again with that stimulating energy, that drove out all other thoughts and said:—

"Specimen, I wonder not at your surprise; you have much to learn, much to see and much to experience, but all will come in good time. You will reside with me, and I will instruct you. This is the year of our Lord 5575. You are not mad, I am not mad, nor is any one of us mad. Madness is now of the antique past; intelligence is omnipotent. Follow me."

Thus saying he led the way out of the hall by the door through which he had entered, and passing through another door we entered a spacious room lighted I knew not how. This hall was lined right round with stone shelves, on which were arranged myriads of what looked to me to be metal plates placed on edge. I asked what these were, and he said:—

"These are the complete records of the past 5575 years. This is my department in the state; I am keeper of the records, but now you must rest. Intelligence requires rest like all our other faculties. You have experienced great fatigue to-day, and you have seen many things that have astonished you, so you must now lie down on that couch, and allow me to pass you to sleep. When I see that your mental and bodily strength is restored I will put your sleep away, and bring you, my Specimen, into active life again."

"Well," I said, "before I go to rest, please tell me to what nation you belong, and where we are?"

"That is easily answered; but lie down first, and then I will tell you." I lay down and he went on to say:—

"We are Modern British People and we are in Scotland."

This reply amazed me. He seemed to see the astonishment depicted in my face, for he said,—"Compose yourself to rest;" and then he passed his hand gently over my head, and I fell into the most delicious slumber.

PART II.

HAS the reader ever suffered from a serious illness? If so, does he remember the first peaceful, painless, restful sleep that came after that illness, and the delightful sense of pleasure that he experienced when waking up from this slumber. Dear reader, if you have not had this experience, it is almost worth your while to get seriously ill, in order that you may enjoy it, but if you do make up your mind to try the experiment, take care that you get ill in the spring of the year, and let your home be in the country. Town people know nothing of this pleasure, or if they do, they do so only in a very limited degree.

I have come through this experience, and though I was but nine years old at the time, I never shall forget my intense enjoyment, when I awoke from my first painless sleep. Strength of constitution, medical skill, and a mother's devoted nursing had pulled me through.

The sun was shining, the birds were singing, and the creepers that clung round the window were in bright green leaf. My poor enfeebled frame was gaining strength, and all seemed bright, happy and peaceful. My fond and loving mother's face was bright with joy; she thought not of the troubled and weary nights and days of watching that she had passed through; she thought not of the fatigue that had left its mark in care-worn lines on that thoughtful loving face. And then, to add to my enjoyment, there were the brothers, sisters, and the friends that came with their kind and loving congratulations, who brought lovely innocent flowers,—the emblems of that purity and beauty that we should live to attain.

Afterwards there came the days of convalescence. I was well wrapped up, carried into the garden, and placed in a low chair. Ah! what a pleasure was this, what enjoyment was there here, for one who had been snatched from the grave's very brink, and restored by a merciful and kind providence, to life, health and happiness. The seeds that I had planted in my little garden before my illness were now strong plants. The primroses and lilies are in bloom. Under yon great evergreen tree, see the robin hopping about while warbling to his mate; and look at the rays of sunlight penetrating the thick foliage, giving every shade of color, from the darkest olive almost down to the brightest of yellow. Everything to my eyes and thoughts and feelings was beaming with an untold richness of beauty and enjoyment. I have, since those happy days, often thought why it was that the pleasure of those moments was so intense, so truly enjoyable. I suppose it was because the mind that had been an utter blank for some months, on its reopening to life, had a vividness of perception that acted as a stimulant to the observation of nature's beauties. And thus there was engendered an enjoyment, and a true appreciation, of the harmonious beauty of the works of the Great Creator, that has been a lasting impression on my mind, as distinct, lovely, and enjoyable now, as it was thirty years ago.

How long I had lain on the couch in the Recorder's hall I cannot say, but when he passed me from sleep's repose to activity I experienced the same pleasant feelings as already referred to when a child, although the surroundings were different, so different as to make a comparison seem absurd.

When I wakened, my friend the Recorder was standing by my side. He said, "Wake up, my Specimen, you have had sufficient slumber, and you will now bathe, and change those garments that you wear for some more in keeping with the habits of the people with whom you now reside!" Up to this moment I had never given any thought to my garments. They consisted of an ordinary suit of grey tweed, with strong boots and a soft felt hat. I got up, and my venerable friend led me to a room that was entered by one of the side doors off the Recorder's hall. In the centre of this room was a bath, made of white marble, sunk below the level of the floor, and through which a stream of water continually flowed. The bath was very spacious, and I should say measured about twelve feet by eight and was about four feet deep. On a chair near were towels and a suit of clothing similar to the Recorder's. He left me alone, closing the door, and I undressed and proceeded to get into the bath. In doing so I went down the marble steps at the middle. When I put my feet into the water, I was surprised at its great buoyancy. I had only gone down four steps, when I found I could hardly stand; while I was stooping down to feel the water with my hands, I lost my footing and fell right into the bath, the displacement of my feet and legs seeming to heave me upwards. I fully expected that I should go right to the bottom, but such was not the case. I lighted head foremost in the water and floated about like a cork on the surface, not more than one fourth of my body being immersed.

I tasted the water to know if it were salt, as I knew that it is much easier to float in salt water, but I found it was quite fresh. To get myself wet all over I rolled round and round on the surface, and after I was thoroughly bathed, got out and dried myself. I then attempted to put on my new garments, but as this was no easy task, I sat down on the chair to work out this problem. Looking at the clothing I found it to consist of one piece of a white silkish cloth, pleated at one end in the form of a kilt. I at last solved the difficulty, by fastening the latter portion round my loins, and disposing of the remainder as best I could around my body and shoulders.

If not exactly correct in the disposition of my clothing, I had at least made a fairly good attempt at dressing for the first time in a modern costume. I found that a pair of light shoes was also provided for my use, and these I got on my feet with some difficulty, as they were rather small. There were also two leg weights the same as those my guides wore, but

I did not put them on, as I thought they would only be an encumbrance.

When my toilet was completed, I sat down and ran over in my mind the entire circumstances of my extraordinary position, but gave up all explanations in despair. The Recorder, I remembered had said that we were now in the year of our Lord 5575. Could this be? If so, I must have been dead for over three thousand years, and he also said we were in England, and that he belonged to the English nation. He called me a "Specimen," at which I was not a bit annoyed, though if one of the sages outside had addressed me by that name, I should most certainly have been in a rage with him. But my new friend was so different from the others, his face was so benevolent, and the power of his intelligence or will so intense, that I somehow felt that he might say or do anything he liked with me.

In a short time my friend entered again, and came over to me, saying:—

"How did you enjoy your bath?"

I answered, "Very much indeed; but what buoyant water you have."

"Oh!" he replied, "the water has just the same specific gravity as it ever had, which remains constant; but the force of intelligence that now reigns has made your body like ours, very light. But, my Specimen, I shall explain all these matters to you later on." Then he looked at me in a kindly searching way, and continued:—

"You have large digestive organs; do you not hunger?"

This caused me to think when I had last partaken of food, and I answered,—"By your account it must be more than three thousand years since I have had aught to eat."

"Yes," he said, smiling, "it must be more than that; but still, Specimen, you have these organs, which are large ones, and until they have been reduced to modern dimensions, it is well that you should partake slightly of food, so follow me!"

He moved towards the end of the bathroom, and passing through another door, we entered a little room which he said was his private study. He placed his hand on an ivory button in a kind of writing desk that stood in the middle of the room. This immediately opened from the centre, the portions of the top folding back, apparently without any assistance, exposing a tray on which was placed bread, fruit, and two glasses of water. He invited me to partake of the bread and fruit, while he sipped the water. I began to eat, although I did not feel the least hungry, and I also sipped a little water. I did not like the idea of eating alone, and asked my friend why he did not keep me company. He said,—"You see I am a modern man, and have no need of food; I simply take a little water to moisten my lips and maintain the moisture of the body, but, otherwise, all mankind now live by breathing a pure and nourishing atmosphere." Placing his hands on his stomach, or where it should be, he continued, "I did not speak quite correctly, when I said I have no digestive organs, but I was not far off the truth, because the advancement of science and intelligence has proved that by generations of training, along with a change of atmosphere that took place, these organs could be almost entirely dispensed with. We have worked in this direction for thousands of years, and the result has been that we now live purely by respiration, and have reduced their functions to that of supplying moisture to the body. You will notice that our chests are very large, because we require greater lung power, now that we have dispensed with solid food. This organ of respiration has been increased by nature to meet the requirements of the new conditions under which we live. In the present age it is only the lower animal creation that eat, and need the power of digestion, but how this came about requires much explanation, which I shall give you later on. You must not be too anxious, my Specimen, to know everything at once. Only think that your day is more than three thousand years past, and remember, that even in your short life you saw great changes made, such as the introduction of steam, the telegraph, the telephone, and the electric light. Bear in mind that through all those ages science has been at work, and that intelligence and brain power have been advancing in an increasing degree with every year. When your mind enlarges, which I hope it will, under my instruction, you will see and appreciate with clearer eye and understanding, what has taken place through these many generations. I have, owing to the nature of my office in the state, an intimate knowledge of ancient history and ancient tongues, and when I have time, I shall instruct you further. Now, if you have appeased your appetite, I shall take you over this branch of our state offices. You must walk quietly with me. Express astonishment with nothing you see, but notice everything. Do not ask me questions, even outside the buildings, if you can possibly avoid doing so. Where opportunity occurs I shall volunteer explanations. Just let me arrange your costume before we go out, as you have not quite managed to adjust it according to our custom. You will find that your strange features, figure, and complexion will draw quite enough curiosity towards you without having an ill-arranged costume. Oh! by the way, I notice that you have not put on your 'leg-weights' as you call them; you will require them, I assure you. Allow me to fetch them, later on I shall explain their use."

I stooped and put them on, as I had seen them on the guides, and I noticed that the recorder also wore his. I then walked about to accustom myself to their use. At first I went clink, clink, knocking one against the other, but in a short time I managed to keep my legs far enough apart to keep clear of striking them against one another as I walked. They certainly looked to me but a poor outcome of the intelligence of this boasted modern race. If they really required weights, they might have made them of such a shape as would have allowed one to walk without carrying his legs like the letter **A**.

The Recorder said, "Now we shall start. From the outside, this building must have looked to you very small." I remarked that it did. "Now," he said, "how soon you forget my instructions. I told you I would do all the speaking while we were inside. Don't forget that again. You speak so loudly that you would startle numbers of our people, many of whom belong to a lower type of intelligence, and are therefore incapable of allowing for the difference of customs that existed in past ages. This building that we are in is the seat of the Nor-West Provincial Grand Council of Britain, and the Executive sit here regularly to administer the business of the district. We are now going into the hall of despatch. All messages on matters relating to the State are despatched from this hall." We entered a large hall where there were at least one hundred figures sitting in rows along low benches formed of stone. Opposite each figure was a message stool exactly similar to those I had noticed before. Each stool bore a letter and a number. On coming closer to the figures, I saw that they were all women. They were dressed in the same light sort of silky material, and appeared intent on their work. They were of various ages, some had dark, others light hair, but the majority had grey. One stately personage sat on an elevated stool, and directed the entire operations in this department. The younger girls were many of them pretty, but the large heads, big chests and long small bodies gave them a curious uncouth look. There was, however, one thing that impressed me greatly, the brilliancy of their eyes. The expression of their faces struck me as sad, but when the Recorder spoke to them their faces brightened up, and their smile was most fascinating. That they were intelligent beyond any women that I had had experience of, there could be no doubt. Intelligence was depicted in every line of their features. The Recorder spoke to them in an unknown tongue, so I did not understand what he said, but from the sly and inquisitive glances that were cast at me from time to time, I could plainly discover that the "Specimen" was the subject of conversation. The remarks of the Recorder, however, consisted of very few words, so we passed through the despatch rooms very quickly, considering the number of operators he spoke to in passing. The quantity of despatches that came in and went out was something prodigious, one line of stools seemed to be receiving while the other was delivering. All the messages came on little metal plates, the same as those I previously described. I was most anxious to ask the Recorder how these despatches were transmitted, but his injunctions about speaking were so strong, that I refrained.

We now entered what he explained to me was the Court of Justice, a very small chamber, not more than twenty feet square. There were three venerable looking judges sitting on the bench, and one clerk sitting at the end of a table facing the judges. In front of him were a number of metal plates on which he was busy writing. There was a man on each side of the table, one of whom was answering questions put to him by one of the judges. After we came out, the Recorder informed me that these two men had some dispute, which the judges, after hearing the case, would settle. "In your day," he went on to say, "this pleading used to be done by lawyers or advocates, but intelligence has put an end to that business, and a good thing it is too. Many lawyers in your day, as far as I can judge from records of the past, lived on the poor, mystifying justice, leading even judges astray; but all were not bad.

"I am now going to take you to the legislative assembly hall. We have an outer and an inner house. The outer house consists of thirty members, fifteen men and fifteen women. The inner house consists of ten members who have the right to elect three of their number to sit in the Grand National Council that assembles near the capital. Women are not allowed to sit in the inner house." On entering, we found the whole thirty members present, and four clerks sat at the central table. One fine looking man was addressing them evidently with great and powerful arguments. His face was a perfect picture of energy and force. Although I could not understand one word he said, I could imagine I did, because of his earnest voice and expressive features, and yet he never raised his voice much above a loud whisper. It was evidently the rule to speak in whispers in modern society. After this orator had finished, a lady rose to address the house. She was really a splendid looking creature. There was a dignity and solemnity about her bearing that was something grand to contemplate. She was tall as compared with the rest of this curious race, but the intensity and winning force of her expression made a deep impression on me. I said to myself: "Truly if this is a specimen of our race as now developed, intelligence has improved it, beyond all conception, except in the matter of form."

Other men and women got up and spoke while we were there; and the Recorder lingered a long time. He was evidently interested in the arguments that he heard, at which I do not wonder, because I, who understood them not, was fascinated by what I saw and heard. All the men and women were dressed in the same material, and the costumes were cut in the same way, the only difference being that the females wore the kilted portion of the costume reaching down nearly to their feet. All, however, wore the leg weights that I was so curious about.

After we got out the Recorder said,—"The first two that spoke are two of our most profound thinkers and best orators." We now entered the inner house, where we found the ten members were sitting. There were only two clerks at the central table in this house. The members of the inner house, I noticed, were much older men than those of the outer house, and very grave and dignified in their demeanour. They did not stand while they spoke, but remained sitting. We did nothing more than peep into this house, the Recorder remarking that there was nothing of much interest going on. I noticed, however, when I entered with my companion, that I was attracting attention, but all here were of the highest type of the people, they were evidently too well bred to take any marked notice of me.

My companion now said that he would take me to the department of science and arts in another building hard by. So for the first time since entering this building, I was again in the open air. Being now outside I ventured to address the Recorder. I asked him how long I had slept, and he replied, "You slept two days and three nights." "But," I said, "I have never seen night in this curious country yet." "No," he replied, "that is true, but you must remember that you have not been awake any night since you arrived." Then I asked,— "How is it that the inside of these buildings is so light while there are no visible windows?" "That is arranged by a series of reflectors placed on the roof which transmit the light to the ceilings, and the ceilings reflect it down towards the floor. The ceilings are constructed of a material discovered by one of our great scientists in the year 4562, which has the extraordinary power of absorbing the light of the sun; and, by another ingenious invention of the same great man, the discharge of this stored light can be controlled in such a way that it is only given off as we require it. A ceiling absorbs enough light in one day to light the building with a moderate, pleasant light for three days and three nights. After this invention all other forms of lighting became obsolete. I do not object to your speaking when we are outside, but please speak as low as you can. Our hearing is very acute, and it is not the custom to speak so loudly as you did in the year 1888. The human organs of hearing must in your day have been but crude instruments, if it required so much exertion on the part of the speaker to make others hear." As I now saw a number of the same type of mortals as those that had acted as my guides gliding about, I asked the Recorder what position these people occupied in society, and he said,—"These people correspond with the uneducated working classes and the people of inferior intellectual capacity of your day. They are intellectually a much lower class of beings compared with those, for example, you saw in the outer and inner houses. We try to elevate them, but in vain. It has been the same in all ages, and it will, I fear, be the same to the end of time. In man the Creator has decreed that all shall not have mental equality; one mind must predominate over another. You will find hundreds of men of equal bodily strength, but I have never yet met with two minds that could be said to be on a mental equality. The mind seems to me to be a power within us that is possessed within itself of a creative power, and this again appears to be a power that is forced by its own individuality to strive to outshine all others. So long as we live, mind is storing up knowledge—not to be used in the identical form in which it is acquired, as parrots repeat the words they learn—No!

a great mind absorbs all it hears, and reads, and sees, giving out nothing in the same words or form in which it had been absorbed. When a great mind speaks or writes, it expresses something original, influenced no doubt by the stored knowledge, but it comes out in a new and a bright garb that is most refreshing.

"But inferior minds can only shine in quoting the sayings or in relating the doings of others. These are of the parrot type; they amuse for a time, but when their store of quotations is exhausted they are like the water tank that has run dry, and has to await refilling. They can create nothing fresh or new. So it is, and so it must remain. That cry about equality that has so often made a noise in the world is a snare and a delusion. Human intelligence cannot be equal, and so the inevitable must remain. 'Tis the will of the Creator, and we cannot, with our poor intellectual power, alter it even if it were desirable to do so."

We had by this time passed through a door in the outer wall that surrounded the courts of the executive, at the opposite side to that by which I had entered. We were now quite in the country, and the Recorder pointed to a mountain at a considerable distance off, and said,—"That is the Society of Arts which I referred to." I replied, "That is not hard by." "Oh yes, it is. It will not take us long to get there; give me your arm." The minute he touched my arm, even through the clothing, that curious thrill, which I previously had experienced, shot through me. It was just as pleasant as before, but not so gruesome. I asked him what it meant. "That is," he said, "a power that we of this generation possess. It is the power of storing energy, and the power of transmitting that energy to others. The greater the intellectual power of the individual is, the greater his power of storage and of transmission. It is, in fact, a measure of intellect; but we must be moving." I now saw him casting a lot of gravel out of a pocket in his kilt; and he remarked, "This is 'lightening' for the journey." I said, "Why not cast off these leg weights?" By way of reply he simply smiled, and said, "Come along." Off we started, skipping and bounding over the ground, clearing everything before us with an amazing rapidity, that made our flight quite exhilarating. We passed several parties moving in the opposite direction. To many of these my friend nodded and exchanged a friendly greeting, that they seemed to understand; but to me the pace was so great that I could only see something like a great white bird skipping along the ground, no sooner in sight than it had passed. Yet, the Recorder would say, "Here is a fine intellect coming our way; remarkable man that; of great value to the State," and so on. He must have recognised his friends miles ahead, long before my vision could see them.

Our journey was over in about ten minutes. We were now on the top of a hill in front of a large building with a flat roof. I could not refrain from looking round, and prayed my companion to allow me to ask him some questions before I went in, as I was thirsting for explanation and knowledge. He saw I was anxious, and looking at me compassionately, he said,—"My poor Specimen, I know all you are thinking of. I know all that is passing through your mind, or to speak correctly, I should have said nearly all, but your mind is not yet in a fit state to receive what I have to tell you. I only beg again that you consider the changes three thousand years will work, and thus prepare your mind for that which is yet to be told. You are anxious to know all about that ruined city—rest assured that that sad story will be related to you in good time—it is of the past, while we are dealing with the present."

PART III.

SOCIETY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE.

WE entered the building by a door that led into a large hall. At one side of this hall was a desk, and seated at the desk was a female clerk. The Recorder went up, and said a few words to her, and she then handed him a small metal token. He told me this was a special pass that would admit us to every part of the establishment. We first entered a great room where students of both sexes were engaged in modelling the human figure such as they believed it to be in my own day. These models were being produced from engravings on metal plates of various sizes that were supposed to represent the various celebrated pieces of statuary of Rome, Greece, and England. Now, being an artist, I felt that this was at least a subject with which I was conversant. I examined many of these works, but found them not the least like the originals that I had seen. The ideas that these people had of the true proportions of the human frame of those they called the ancients, was to me almost grotesque. They apparently could not realize the fact that the heads of their figures were at least twice the size they should be; and they apparently failed to see that the enormous chests that they gave their figures did not exist in the days of the ancients, nor did they realize the fact, that the ancients had stomachs of a reasonable size. Only think of a large-headed, big-chested Venus having her ancles garnished with these extraordinary leg weights. On passing into another room, I saw the cause of this disregard of the true proportions of the ancients. Here the students were working from the living model. It so happened that Venus was the subject, and I must say I never saw a more extraordinary Venus. The modelling of these students, who evidently belonged to a very advanced class, was wonderfully true to modern nature. You could see every muscle and every line of expression truly represented. The positions were true to life, but then what seemed absurd to me was calling such monstrosities as these, models of the ancients. I felt aggrieved at this disregard to truth, and I considered it debasing to the art I loved. I must have looked all I thought, because the Recorder said to me, "This is the first time, since I have been in your company, that I have seen you look really sad. I shall ask you to explain the cause when we get outside, for although I can partially follow your thoughts, and although I see you appear disgusted, yet I can't understand what there is in that which you have seen to give you pain."

We now entered the school of painting. Here again were hundreds of students at work, some painting flowers and birds, which were lovely. The harmony of colour, and the correctness of the drawing, were something wonderful. Each flower, each petal, each leaf, each stem, seemed to stand out in the boldest relief, and the feathers of the birds had that soft separate distinctness which is necessary to form a true representation of the living whole : yout could almost imagine that they were about to spring from the tiny stem on which they perched; the eyes appeared to twinkle, and the throat to warble. Truly, these were studies true to life, both in form and colour.

We passed on from one group of students to another, and I examined their work with the interest that only an artist can take in art. One girl was at work on a colossal painting of a man of her period. Here, the drawing and colouring was all that could be desired; but the subject! No doubt it pleased her; yet the so-called beauty and proportion of this extraordinary race was in discord with all my pre-conceived notions of what is symmetrical in the human form. Still I afterward discovered that it was possible to have one's ideas altered.

Coming to a group of landscape painters I noticed that their work was wanting in originality. No doubt it was in detail true to nature. No doubt the colours were properly blended, and put on with great skill, exactitude, and softness, but there was a want of that dashing artistic effect, that light and shade, that glimmer and sheen, which stamps the true artistic genius that is only rarely met with. All these drawings and all these paintings of landscape had a preciseness and exactitude about them, that indicates continuous schooling by hard and fast rules and principles, rather than by the spontaneous outcome of genius.

When we got outside of the hall of painting, the Recorder stopped and said, "Now, my Specimen, explain to me what has been troubling you while in the School of Art?" "Well," I said, "I have been less impressed by this school of yours than by anything I have yet seen in your strange country. The drawing of your students is wonderfully exact, and their colouring is all that could be desired. So long as they keep to birds and subjects that are individual, so long as they keep to still life, or even to painting single figures from life, they produce splendid work; but when they try grouping, when they try to represent distance, the exactness of their details destroys the entire effect. Then when we come to their modelling in clay—what you call reproductions of ancient statuary—when I think of Venus with a head out of all proportion to her body, with a chest big enough for three Venuses, and with a waist not big enough for a baby Venus, and twice as long as it should be, it is to me really too awful to contemplate."

"My poor Specimen," he said, "I can now quite understand your horror. It is quite natural for you to feel as you do, but you must remember that our people do not see as you see. You notice as we came along that I could see and recognise my friends that were approaching me long before you were conscious that they were coming towards us. All our people see with the same distinctness, and if they painted pictures that appeared correct to you, they would in their eyes be entirely out of drawing. As regards Venus, we have all been taught that she was the most beautiful woman that ever lived. Now, tell me, how could a woman with a pin head, a sunken chest, and a waist as large as that of four women, be a beautiful woman? Such a person could neither be interesting, intelligent, nor even wholesome, and could never be a true Venus, at least according to our conceptions of beauty. I have seen several drawings and bronze statues of Venus, dating as far back as three thousand years; but the ancients had no idea of beauty or of the true symmetrical proportions of the human form; they represented bloated gluttons, not intelligent mortals."

We moved along in silence, but I could not help ruminating over what this wise man had said. Here was a man of wondrous intelligence, here was a man possessed of a marvellous power of conception, a man that I believed to be the most thoughtful and wise philosopher that I had ever met or read of, talking what to me appeared the most absurd nonsense that it was ever my lot to listen to.

I could understand his explanation about the necessity of distinctness of detail in modern landscapes, but to make a Venus with a head, a chest, a waist like that, was not, could not, be the outcome of intelligence. It was the purest heathen Vandalism, but further ruminating brought me to think that this experience carried with it an important moral, and that is, "Never judge the actions, thoughts or tastes of others harshly," for what they do, and think, may, according to their lights, be absolutely right; if we could only see with their eyes we might be of the same opinion and act as they do. The Recorder, saying he would take me next through the Medical School, beginning with the Museum, turned to the left and entered a long corridor. While going along this corridor I thought, as no one was present, I might venture to ask him a question, and I said, "When you were adjusting my garments to-day, you said you did so to prevent the people from staring at me. Now, although we have seen a great many people to-day, not one of them has shown much interest in me. How is this? My appearance, although I am clothed in the same way as you are, is very different." He looked at me with great earnestness for a moment or two, his face literally glowing with pleasure, and said, "My dear Specimen, we have to-day been moving among the higher intellects of our people, who make it part of their nature never to be surprised, and above all things never to be rude. Besides, to be frank with you, most of them must have seen and examined you before. You forget how long you have slept. During that time you have been seen by many of our great minds, several of whom came great distances to see and medically examine you. I shall presently give you proof of the great interest that has been and is taken in you. This is the Museum." We here entered a splendid hall fitted with all kinds of cases and stands, on which were placed medical specimens and models. Here was a great model of a Brain, that was mapped out in minute squares of about one-tenth of an inch. Each square had a number on it that corresponded with a chart on the wall, drawn to a very large scale, the squares on the chart being again subdivided into minute squares, each of which bore a number or sign. The Recorder explained to me that each globule of the brain controlled a separate nerve or system of nerves.

"For instance," said he, "one group controls the right hand and all its fingers and nerves, another, the left hand and all its fingers, and so on. In a left handed person, the left hand group is more strongly developed than the group belonging to the right hand, and in a right handed person, the right hand group of globules becomes more developed." Then he pointed out the sight globules, the hearing globules, the musical globules,—he knew all off by heart. There was a group that controlled each and every part of the body. My friend informed me that this brain was exceptionally large, and was the model of that of a great philosopher, who died about a year ago. We went round the hall examining everything of interest. We saw model lungs by the hundred, they were of immense size. We saw livers that the Recorder said belonged to full sized men, yet they were only about as big as a hen's. All the digestive organs were the merest toys of things, but the brains and the lungs were tremendous. Seeing my perplexity, he explained:—"You see, my Specimen, in your day, you gratified the desires of your palates, and neglected your brains. Now, in our day of advancement, we live by respiration, we live in fact on the air that is free to all, therefore our lungs must be large. The only thing we require to digest is a few drops of water daily, so we do not need the great cumbersome organs of digestion that you carry about with you. Would you like to see your liver?" I was horrified at this question, and thought, "What can the man mean, he is never going to operate on me?" I felt queer. The fact is I disliked surgery, particularly when I was to be the subject. He saw my state of mind at once, and smiling, said, "My good Specimen, do not think we would hurt you by thought, word, or knife; you are far too valuable and instructive to us to allow one hair of your head to be hurt. Come here!" And so saying he lifted a screen, and there I saw myself, my very self, lying on the same sofa that I had slept on, dressed in my old tweed suit, and fast asleep. I started back in utter astonishment, and clasped my hands to my head. I felt quite dazed and stupid, and fully believed that my spirit must have come out of my body, and gone into that of another man, while the body was left to sleep. I stared at myself as I lay, and could see my chest heaving and falling in the gentle slumber that I so much enjoyed.

The Recorder was amused, I could see, at my dilemma. He said:—"You are not mad, my Specimen, you are only surprised." He went up to me as I lay; he opened my vest and shirt; he folded them back, but I never stirred; then he took my chest and lifted it off. At this I started back, and cried out, "Oh! please don't," but he smiled again, remarking, "What a beautiful model" (for model it was). "What skill is represented here. See the lungs moving, see the heart pumping, see the liver lying like a sluggish bloated monster devoted to gormandising and gluttony. There you are, Specimen, as true as life. Are you not ashamed of your internal construction so much given to greed, and so little given to intellect?" With this he replaced the chest, and took off the skull, leaving the brain exposed. "Look at this brain," he said; "it is diminutive in size, it is crude in construction, it is uncultivated. Compare it with the brain I let you see over there, and perhaps you will then be able to form some idea of the progress that intellect has made in the last three thousand years."

By this time I began to get very sick of myself. I never had my badness so fully laid bare to me before, and I hope I shall never experience the same humiliation again. He told me to be comforted, and to come and feel the model. I did so, but it was so natural that until I felt that it was wax, or rather an elastic material like wax, I was convinced that I had seen my own, my very own poor body lifted apart. I asked him:—"Had I been cut asunder while asleep to get this model made?" He said:—"We are wise, we are clever, but we have not yet arrived at that stage of scientific knowledge that would enable us to cut a living creature asunder and leave him uninjured. But we can so strongly illuminate the inside of any sleeping creature that when in a dark room the whole body becomes transparent, and we can then examine every nerve and every muscle through powerful magnifying glasses from the outside of the body. This is very useful for the examination of internal complaints or tumours whether in the lungs or in other parts of the body. Yes, my Specimen, I am glad you came. When I first saw you, I showed my extraordinary delight by the dance

I made round you. I only dance when in the greatest height of my joy. Such an event as your arrival was truly worthy of a fitting expression of joy. Fancy, you brought us a living example of the poor manhood of over three thousand years ago. Truly, it is said that small sparks may kindle great fires. What a small spark you are, my Specimen, and still, I suppose, it cannot be doubted that it is from such as you that we are descended. Yet I do like you, and will devote myself to you while you are here, and if you do leave us you will leave us a wiser and a better man. I fear your skull is too hard now to expand, but, let me see, I think I could have it softened." "Oh, dear Mr. Recorder," I cried, "do not think of such a thing. I am now too old for such an experiment, and must be content with that which I have." "Very well," he said, "but we must try and have all the available space at our disposal in that skull of yours properly packed. I see that this inspection of your own details has been rather too much for you. Come, we will have a rest and refreshment before going further."

I was now taken into a side room where he touched a button, and immediately a large tray containing fruit and water was lowered by lines from the ceiling. We sat down, he sipped a little water. I ate some fruit, and drank a little also. After we had rested for a time, the Recorder said: "We have many other branches of arts and science that are taught here, such as chemistry, astronomy, botany, floriculture, mechanics, mathematics. We also teach the dead languages, such as English (what we call Ancient English), French, Spanish, Russian, Italian, Hindustani, Greek, Latin, and many others. Most of our higher and middle orders study Ancient English and other languages, while the lower classes, that is such men as your guides, only study modern English and Latin, their intellects not being of sufficient power for greater study. As you are tired and overcome by your exertions I shall just take you hurriedly through some of these schools."

The first we went through was that of music. I was charmed by hearing the various classes of students singing part songs; their voices were not strong, or possibly my hearing was defective, but the tune and harmony were so good and the melodies so lovely, that I stood enchanted. There was no separation of sexes; they seemed to be mixed in all the classes. Indeed, now that I remember it, in all the classes this was the rule. The musical instruments used were mostly wind instruments, but quite unlike anything I had seen before. While they had a certain resemblance to those I had been used to, sufficient, indeed, to show that ancient man had something to do with their invention, yet modern man had a much larger share of credit due to him for his great improvements. The violin was used also. In this there was little alteration. It had held to its good old world fashion—strings, bridge, finger-board and all. I will ever respect this instrument for this lasting proof of the genius of the poor despised ancients.

My friend next took me into a garden of the college of floral decoration. Here hundreds of young men and women were at work planting, weeding, and training plants, suitable for ornament. The plots were laid out in various ways, with many combinations of colour. Harmony of colours seemed to be the great aim of the instructors of these students. One effect was very grand; it was a huge bed on an ascending slope, in the form of a great rainbow, giving all the primary colours, the blending of these colours, one with another, being truly perfect. The slope was completely covered by a little blue flower mingled with grey that formed a background representing the sky and clouds. Had there been but a slight shower of rain it would have made the scene true to nature. Then there were huge beds representing sea anemones, brilliant in all the glorious beauty of submarine colouring. Star fish were scattered here and there over the green sward, while a great snake was depicted in all the subdued colours of its slimy skin. Everything was a study of beauty for beauty's sake alone. Utility seemed entirely ignored. The labour and thought it must have taken to conceive and work out these wondrous designs, and to obtain plants that bloomed so regularly, and possessed colours so uniform and equal in growth as to produce the effects before me, must have been enormous.

The Recorder saw with pleasure my intense admiration of the beauty of the scene, and said:—"My Specimen, this is the school of harmony of colour for this great district. It is here that all the youth of our country have their tastes placed on a true and correct basis. All who have gone through this school have a sound knowledge of that harmony that is so beautiful in all things, and so necessary for the permanent good of the community. I have not had time to show you one-tenth of the classes of this great seat of education which stretches all along these two hills to the westward. You will notice that we keep everything clear of the ruined city you explored.

Our higher classes rarely visit these great city solitudes of desolation, except to survey the result of the futile labours of a sordid and selfish race of gluttons, that lived but to eat, drink, and die. If you feel strong enough I shall now take you to the abodes of our people, and show you their mode of living after they are married and settle down in life. After this survey of the surrounding district we shall come back, and have a few hours' sleep till midnight. Then I shall take you to the observatory to view the wondrous, the illimitable firmament, that is ruled, arranged, and controlled by that great—yes, that inconceivably great—being, the Creator of all things. When anyone of us begins to get proud of what we have achieved, or when we see that any of our people begin to think they are deserving of praise and esteem from their fellows, then such are taken to the observatory, and shown what space is. We thus cause them to think what an intellect it must be that can control this universe. When we show them those stars and planets, those suns and those moons moving in regular order, and when we ask them what are their achievements, what are their works, what are their minds to the Mind that has created all this, they sink within their miserable insignificance, and crawl away like the worms that they are, humbled to the very dust. What right have we poor mortals to be proud of anything we can do? No, this is not the creed that we would cultivate; this is not the creed that we would believe. Now that we have obtained a moderate amount of intellectual power, we can see and understand our littleness; we can be ambitious for more knowledge, but we cannot, we must not feel proud of the little we have. This pride of knowledge, this seeking after popular applause, this giving of applause to individuals who set themselves up as guides and philosophers, has been the ruin of hundreds of thousands of past generations, who thought they had great intellects—we see and know this, and we avoid it as we do Hades.

"Now, my Specimen, shall we start? I am

ready if you are; it will be an extended and hurried flight; sharpen your vision, absorb what you see with your mind; I want you to prepare yourself for what you have to hear from me of the history of the past, by first understanding the world as it now is. The limited area that I shall show you will give you an idea of what the rest is like, allowing for the variations of climate and temperature due to geographical positions."

We moved on through the garden until we got to the apex of the rainbow bed. Here he placed his right hand under my arm, grasping it as he did on the previous occasion. The same curious feeling of power flowing into my body was the result of this grasp. Presently he said, "Now then, my Specimen, we will start," and we began to travel across the country with the same rapidity as before. Hill and dale seemed to be no obstacle, on we went with wonderful speed. I noticed that while on my previous journey I could not see very distinctly, on this journey I could see almost everything that we passed over or near. I suppose the reason was that I was becoming more accustomed to the new atmosphere, new circumstances, and new life. The country that we were passing through was undulating, and dotted all over with small houses surrounded with gardens resplendent with beautiful flowers. The whole seemed to me like one great pleasure garden. At each house we generally saw one or two people, all wearing the same simple white costume. The women invariably had their heads decked with flowers, gracefully arranged. At one, we would hear instrumental music, at another, singing, at another, there would be groups of people playing some game or discussing some subject. Then, all in a moment they would start off in pursuit of us, and play around us like so many birds flying in the air, only none of us seemed to have the power of flying right off the ground—we simply tripped along it, barely touching it. It seemed to me as if some strong, buoyant layer of atmosphere covered the surface of the earth, as even in passing over the finest plots of flowers, we did not injure a single petal. There were no roads in this country, no railways, nothing but land and water, river, lake, gardens and mountains. I noticed that I had not seen a single animal except the little beasts like rabbits and hares that I saw among the ruins. No horses, no cows, no dogs. Of birds, there were a number of the smaller singing varieties, and many that were beautiful in plumage, but the Recorder told me there still existed many beasts and reptiles.

We came now to a country of hill and lake. The hillsides were laid out in the same way as the undulating country. Houses and gardens—no fields of corn, no utilitarian tillage—all appeared to be laid out for pleasure and intellectual enjoyment. Over the surface of the lakes there moved hundreds of little fairy-like boats that sped along at great speed without any apparent means of propulsion; in these were sitting, happy, laughing people, some alone, some with children, some playing musical instruments, some talking with their friends in neighbouring boats. The colours of these little crafts seemed to be very varied, but none were glaring; all were such as harmonised with the clear and pure-looking water that reflected these many tinted water sprites on its ever rippling surface. To this add the reflected beauty of a summer sky, and you have a picture that no artist could reproduce with truth to its loveliness.

We travelled on for some hours, resting at times on the mountain tops to view the villas and gardens beneath, and admire the gorgeous beauty of the entire scene. We now bent our way in a long sweep in the direction of our starting place, where we ultimately arrived, shortly before dark. I had seen much of this strange country, and noticed that desolation only existed where there were ruined cities and towns. I remarked this to my friend, and he said:—

"Oh, yes! My poor Specimen, these are terrible monuments to the perdition of a degraded people. You will hear their history in good time. We must now to rest, and prepare for the observatory." We went again into the building, and entering a hall, having about twenty sleeping couches, the Recorder selected two, and we lay down to rest. I soon was sound asleep, and out of all doubt as to security.

PART IV.

THE OBSERVATORY.

I HAD not, as I thought, been well asleep, before I was awakened by the Recorder saying:—"Wake up, Specimen! If you wish to go to the Observatory, it is time we were off." I was soon beside him, feeling quite refreshed. He said it was now midnight; but the room in which we had slept was quite light, the luminous ceiling taking the place of lamps. We at once went out into the open air. Just as I got out, I found that my eyes were pained by the intense darkness after the bright light in the interior. Sudden changes of any kind give humanity pain, whether it be from light to darkness, from joy to sorrow, or from great sorrow to great joy, there is always a feeling of pain, that, though but transitory, is acute. No doubt this is due to the reaction of the nerves from one extreme to the other. After my eyes got accustomed to the darkness, I could see that the scene before us was exceedingly pretty. I saw numbers of specks like fire-flies moving about very rapidly, casting a slight glow around them. These, the Recorder said, were people going about on various errands, who showed these lights to prevent collisions. Each person carried four lights, two placed one over the other on the right shoulder, and one on the left, so that you could tell in which direction they were moving. The fourth light was placed on the back of the head in such a position that it could only be seen from behind. "See, my Specimen, now I am lighted up," said my friend. I looked at him, and saw these tiny little lamps which were not larger than a small pea, and looked like very diminutive incandescent lamps. But the Recorder told me that that was not the case. He said they were made of the same material as the ceilings, and were simply buttons on his costume that absorbed the light during the day, giving it off at night when he uncovered them. He then asked me :—"Should you like to see the grounds illuminated ?" I said :—"It would give me much pleasure."

He went back to the wall of the building and turned a handle. In an instant hundreds of light balls appeared all over the surface of the grounds. One of these was quite close to me, and I went forward to examine it. It appeared like a great ball of chalk, about a foot in diameter, heated to a white heat, but I could feel no warmth coming from it; it was simply a gush of the purest light, and coming as it did off a sphere, the light was thoroughly diffused. "These lights are all constructed of the same wonderful material," remarked the Recorder. "No antiquated coal gas, water gas, electricity, lime, or oil lights, are required now, as in the days of the ancients. No, everything we have is self-sustaining, and lasts for scores of years. We collect our heat in the same way, storing it past until we require it, but this takes more skill and costs more trouble than the storage of light.

The concentrated heat of the sun requires a very refractory material to retain it for any length of time, but our scientific men for generations back have been studying this subject with no small success. We can now store all the concentrated sun heat that we require for our manufactures and for heating purposes; still we have much to learn on this subject."

"But, come along, we must be off to the Observatory. When we get clear of this building, we shall see how the moon and stars look to-night."

He again took me by the arm, imparting the same stream of energy as before; and off we started, passing along as before. There was the same pleasant sensation, the same rapid motion.

On we rushed, passing hundreds of others who were out for a midnight stroll. We paused a moment on a small hill, as the Recorder said, that, now we were well clear of all artificial light and of the buildings, he would like me to examine the moon and stars with the naked eye before we got to the Observatory. We had been travelling so fast that I had not thought of looking at the stars, and the moon being behind us, I did not notice it. But on coming to rest, and looking up through the clear atmosphere the distinctness of each star was something very marked, and as for the moon, it had just emerged from behind a cloud and it was perfectly lovely. It was about a three quarter moon. The brilliancy of the bright side was grand, and the distinctness with which you could see the unilluminated portion of the globe was marvellous. There you saw the outline, floating as it were in an azure atmosphere. My delight on seeing this lovely view of the heavens caused my face and indeed my whole body to beam with a glow of pleasure, and I could not refrain from saying aloud, "How wondrous are Thy works, O Lord!" "Yes," repeated the Recorder, "truly they are wondrous, ay, they are wonderful beyond all comparison. Advanced as we now are, and with all our scientific knowledge, we know that we are just entering on the borders of a vast and inexhaustible question—a question of investigation of such unfathomable magnitude—that I believe tens of thousands of years after our day, even allowing that science and intelligence advance with greater strides than they ever have done, the finite mind of humanity can never grow to be large enough or noble enough to be able to conceive the magnitude of space. No, my Specimen, we must leave that to the mind infinite." Again we started forward at the same rapid pace, never tired, never weary, always pressing onward, until at last we arrived at the top of a great hill, covered by a very large building. "This is our local Observatory," said the Recorder; "you will see from the numbers of visitors that come and go that we make our observatories quite an institution. In fact, as you will see, we make the greatest practical use of the moon; we communicate with all parts of the world by its assistance. We know exactly by tables at what positions of the earth the moon is visible at certain hours and days, and by means of what we call our compound reflectors, we can cast a shadow of any message we like on it. Operators in other parts of the world are constantly observing it also, and take a series of photographs every second of the shadows that we throw, so that observers in various parts of the world are transmitting and receiving news every clear night; these photographs are an exact record of all that goes on all over the world, and this record is made common property, the moon taking the place of a big sign board that all nations see and read at will."

I ventured to ask, "Was the moon inhabited?"

"Oh, dear no!" he said, "that has been disproved beyond all doubt. It is completely covered with a white material like snow; but I tell you what we have proved beyond a doubt, that all the planets are inhabited. We find that the inhabitants of many planets have noticed our reflections as cast on the moon, and we have also noticed theirs. We have a comlete set of photographs of the moon covered with their hieroglyphics, and I have no doubt they have some means of recording ours. Many of our great philosophers are pondering over these hieroglyphics trying to put them into an alphabet, as yet without success, but that too will come some day. The inhabitants of the other planets may find out our code before we find out theirs, but I firmly believe the day will come when the Creator will allow us to converse with them. Perhaps it is the spirits of our own people who are trying to talk with us. Who can tell? Only the Infinite!"

We now entered the Observatory, which was the most extensive institution I had yet seen. It was a great circular building, not less than three hundred feet in diameter. In the centre was an enormous reflecting telescope. I should say the main tube could not be less than twelve feet in diameter; how they ever constructed the lenses of this great investigator of the heavens, I know not. I was allowed to look at the moon through this great instrument, and its surface had all the appearance of a snow clad country. I saw shadows being cast on the white surface, these being no doubt the shadows my friend had explained to me. I thought this system of moon transmission a grand idea, and my carnal mind sped back again to the year 1888. I thought to myself, "What a glorious company could have been floated with this invention at the promoters' back in my time!" The capital might have been ten millions of pounds sterling, and it would have been applied for ten times over, and gone up to a premium in no time." Such were the thoughts that haunted me. The Recorder, I noticed, was looking at me with a sad, earnest face.

He said, "My Specimen, such thoughts as I noticed passing through your mind are the thoughts which led to actions that ruined your nation shortly after your time. I know that, although you call yourself an artist, you have not confined yourself to art alone; you have been doing some stock-jobbing, as it was called in your day. This is the rock the ancients split upon; they lost their heads through it; they lost sincerity of heart through it; they lost nationality through it; but worst of all, they lost morality through it. They went into it to make money, which was a prize in those days, but it invariably ended in their losing the miserable thing they prized so much. My Specimen, defile not your mind with such thoughts." I blushed for shame, as it was true that at one time in my youth I had erred in this way.

I was now shown the stars and planets. There they were in their myriads away! away! in space, inconceivable space! I felt humbled, terribly humbled, after seeing all this. I never had been proud of what I had done. I had never boasted of the little I did do, but how contemptible it all appeared, when placed alongside this! Ah! truly did the Recorder speak when he said, "The Observatory is the place to humble those who dared to boast of what they had achieved."

I was humbled; I was humiliated; I felt that all we could see, all we could think, and all we could imagine, fell short by a hundred-fold, nay, by a million-fold, of a true conception of what space and the universe really is.

I was shown hundreds of instruments, of the most ingenious nature for performing all kinds of astronomical work, and for reproducing all that was seen. There were a great number of astronomers at work, mostly old men, and belonging to the highest order of this strange people. Several of them spoke to me in old English. We conversed for a long time on various subjects of common interest. This was the first place in which the Recorder had introduced me. Much of our conversation was about astronomy. Although I was a fairly well informed man, I did not know enough of astronomy to enter into any discussion, and so wisely contented myself with being spoken to. One old astronomer asked me if I had heard of the comet "Baria." On my replying in the negative, he remarked, "You have much to learn; it was discovered in the year 4200, by a great astronomer called Baria. It has worked extraordinary changes on our globe since that date."

Here the Recorder interposed, saying that my mind was scarcely prepared for such information. "He will get it all in good time," he added.

I was next taken to see what was called a moonbeam separator. This, I was informed, was one of the cleverest inventions that had been made for thousands of years.

Each beam of moonlight could be separated by this machine, and by means of an ingeniously arranged table this beam's fellow, or other ray, could have its location determined by finding the angle it bore to its correspondent, so that one beam might rest in England, while its corresponding ray might rest on some other part of our globe. It had been discovered that these moonbeams would transmit sound with wonderful distinctness, and a sort of telephone had been invented, by means of which any country in our globe on which the moon shone simultaneously, could be communicated with by moonbeam telephone. You could only, however, send a message towards and have it delivered from the bright side of the moon. It was explained to me that the moon must be shining to produce what they termed an active ray of reflected light, but once this ray was created it could be used as a means of transmitting sound. Not being a scientist, I fear I have been unable to fully describe all that I was told about this extraordinary invention, but at the time it was explained to me I thought I understood its principles fairly well.

I was now taken into another room more than twice the size of the Observatory. This was without exception the most interesting place I had yet seen in this land of wonders. The entire room, not less than 600 feet square was one enormous working orrery, shewing the sun, moon, and all the planets in their proper positions. The sun was made of that peculiar white luminous material I have so often mentioned. How the globes were actuated or how supported I could not tell, but there they were, apparently moving about with the same regularity as those in the firmament. But the Recorder informed me this was not the case. "They moved," he said, "with great irregularity, and often came to a standstill.

"You see," he naïvely remarked, "they are but the works of the finite and must be very imperfect, still," he continued, "they are of incalculable value for instructing the young."

I was shown many other marvellous things in the Observatory. But to me, the most striking law of nature that was explained to me, was what the Recorder called the lines of force.

"These," he said, "bear some relation to what you termed magnetism and electricity in your day. These sciences you knew but little of. Your professors used to say, that electricity flowed through wires as water does through pipes. They told you that a magnetic compass, except deflected by local influences, always pointed to the north. But this was very preparatory teaching. We now know a great deal more about these mysterious forces, and yet we know but little. In these mysterious agents there is much that is yet to be learned by future generations. Still we have discovered that both what you call electricity and what you called magnetism can be directed, controlled and utilized, by concentrated human will and intelligence. It is by these powers that we move our bodies through air and over country. It is by this power we propel our ships through the ocean, and our boats over our lakes; it is by this power that we navigate our aerial fleets from one part of the world to the other. In your day you did not understand these great and useful agents. You tried to force them into use by cumbersome mechanical contrivances, but you had to spend more power in getting them associated than you could get out of them when they were associated. The result was that your people spent the world's stock of latent heat that was stored in your coal measures without getting any good results, whereas we can, by the force of our wills, assisted by science, control and utilize these tremendous agents for the benefit of mankind.

"But now, my Specimen, we must to rest, as even the people of this age of advancement require sleep, for without sleep the brain cannot renew its vigour or recuperate its power. The brain is more taxed now than it ever has been since the world began, and it only retains its power if we take advantage of the knowledge we have of its requirements in the way of rest. To-morrow I shall give you a general sketch of Britain as it is; and on the following day I shall take you to see the principal seat of our government."

We now returned, and entered the same room in which we had slept before visiting the Observatory, finding all the beds occupied save the two we had rested on. The occupants evidently slept very lightly, as all sat up and looked at us when we entered, but immediately lay down again.

It was bright as sunshine in the room when I awoke next day. All our fellow sleepers were gone, and the Recorder was ready waiting for me. He provided me with the usual refreshment of bread, fruit and water. He seemed to care for me as one in my day would have cared for a favourite horse or dog; he watched my every movement and anticipated my every want. I believe he could read all that passed in my mind. I did not object to this, as never at any moment did I experience anything but kindly feelings towards him. When I had finished my simple meal, he said:—

"My Specimen, I have now been as long away from my office of records as I can well spare, so if you will excuse me we shall go back to the place we started from. After I have given directions as to the day's business, I shall devote some time describing the present state of the British, or I should rather say what used to be known as the English speaking nations, and thus fulfil my promise to you."

We went outside, and began our journey

back in the same manner as we came, the Recorder supporting me and propelling me by his force of will as before. When we arrived at the seat of Local Government, he went up to the same old Sage, who had received me in the interior of the building when I first arrived, and had a conversation of about ten minutes' duration with him. The Sage took down all his instructions, and when he had finished placed the plate on his message stool, touched the button, and it disappeared. We now passed into the Recorder's office; he invited me to sit beside him at a table. We were just seated, when the door opened, and ten elderly men entered, bearing large trays filled with metal plates of the same kind as I have previously described as having seen resting on the shelves around this room.

The first man came forward and placed his tray on the table. The Recorder, glancing with great rapidity over each plate, signed it at the bottom. He was not long in getting through the ten trays, and when the operation was completed he put a tablet bearing a number on each tray. The men then took the contents of the trays and placed them on the shelves under corresponding numbers to those on the Recorder's tablet. All this would probably occupy about half-an-hour from the time the ten men entered until they left. During the whole of this time not a word was spoken. Everything being done in absolute silence, save the scratching of the writing-pin on the metal surface, and the light jingling of the plates against one another, there was no noise. When the first ten men left, several other batches of ten came in. The same routine was gone through with each batch; and although we must have sat for more than two hours in all I did not weary, the fact being that I amused myself studying the strange looking men that brought in the records.

After he was finished, the Recorder rose, and, asking me to follow him, we passed through a door and entered a very large room filled with men and women of all ages. They looked to me to be from eighteen to eighty, and were all busy at work writing on metal plates. My friend told me that these were his clerks, and that they were engaged writing the day's records of his district.

"We have now two hundred seats of government in the British Empire," he said; "each seat gets a condensed record of the transactions of all the local seats sent to it daily, while a full record is sent from local seats to the Central Government offices, situated within about fifty miles of the city you used to call London, but London, like all other cities and towns, no longer exists except as a ruin. You look anxious about this; but when I have instructed you in the physical and social changes that have taken place, you will not be surprised that we have no cities now."

While walking through this large hall the Recorder stopped and spoke to many of his clerks, giving, as I assumed, instructions, or asking questions as to what they were doing.

We presently returned to his private office, and went from thence through the bathroom into his private study, that in which I had had my first meal in this strange country. Asking me to be seated, he said :—

"Now, my Specimen, having signed all the State records, and seen that my people have work laid out for them for some days, I am free to devote my time to you. I know you are burning with curiosity to hear what your country now is, and how it is governed. You have seen something of the people as they are, and their habits while at work ; but as yet you have seen but little of their pleasures save the boating parties we saw on the lakes and the domestic pleasure you got a glance of as we passed some of their residences. These are things you will soon get familiar with ; but you must be instructed by me, as I can spare time, in the history of what has taken place since your day."

PART V.

"I PROMISED to tell you something about the history of your country from 1888 to the present day. To do this in an exhaustive manner would take a lifetime, so you must be content with the merest sketch, giving but a few of the leading events that have taken place.

"When you have lived long enough with us to learn to read and speak our language I shall place all our records of history at your disposal. If your tastes lead you in that direction you can for yourself investigate them, and by personal study make yourself familiar with all that has taken place. All men and women of the higher classes of the present day must be familiar with the history of their country, if they wish to be respected. I hope, therefore, that you will in due time be able to carry this investigation out, thus gaining for yourself a knowledge that will place you on an equal footing with those with whom you will associate.

"I shall now begin my sketch of what has taken place since your day. Five hundred years after your time the populations of the various countries of the earth had increased enormously. So much was this the case that the earth was then literally a crawling mass of people striving and fighting for very existence. There had been many wars and many famines; still the destruction of life by these scourges had not any material effect in keeping down the increase of population. All the land that was uninhabited in your day was now peopled. What you termed the Dark Continent of Africa, as well as the great continents of Sonth America and Australia, was over-run by humanity. For many centuries the various governments of the earth had made it a rule to do all in their power to preserve decrepit life and allow it to multiply. What between boards of health and sanitary boards, combined with great medical skill, the most sickly children were by nursing brought to the years of maturity and allowed to marry. Many thoughtful people used to wonder what this would all come to, if decrepit and diseased life was to be taken care of and perpetuated in this way. If the sickly and diseased were to be preserved, it must, they stated, lead to sad results later on. Their prophecies turned out to be but too true. At the time my sketch starts the people of the earth were in a deplorable state. They had not the proper means of living in common decency, and, notwithstanding the admitted great skill possessed by their medical men, diseased and decrepit people were more numerous than the strong and healthy. There had also been a great change in the government of England and its dependencies. The colonies long prior to this gave up all but nominal allegiance to Great Britain; all became practically independent, and only sought the assistance of the mother country when, like the prodigal son, they got into trouble; then they came quickly enough and claimed parental assistance.

"All people, both men and women, got the right conferred on them to vote for members for parliament without any educational or other qualification save their manhood. The consequence was that the more numerous or uneducated classes had all the power in their hands, while they were not intellectually endowed with sufficient judgment to enable them to select even the more educated of their own classes as their representatives, although there must have been plenty of good, honest, intelligent men amongst them that would have made much better representatives than the noisy, self-asserting, ignorant men that forced themselves on them.

"Politics became a trade; a race of mountebanks that could rant and influence the people by bombast were returned as representatives of the country, while the better educated and intellectually strong minority were thrown out of all share of the responsible government of their country. As a natural, nay, an inevitable, consequence of such a state of matters, the country became degraded at home and abroad. Discontent arose in all quarters. Agitators put all the blame of this anarchy and confusion on the existence of a crowned head, and it was decided to turn Great Britain into a Republic. This was effected, fortunately without any bloodshed. A Republic was established, but did not improve matters; yet it remained in force for many generations.

"In the year 2888 things had come to such a pitch that England, while beset on all sides by her foreign foes, was not free from enemies in her very midst. These very mountebanks that were returned to parliament by a befooled and trusting people were plotting with her enemies against her; their only aim and object being to further their own selfish sordid ends. Now the intelligent part of the people were forced to see how things were going, and were convinced that if the government was allowed to go on as it was, the result would be utter destruction. They, therefore, called their leaders together, and assisted by many of the people, resolved to make a desperate effort to resist external foes and crush the plotters that they saw everywhere in their midst. This resolution was carried out with determination, and although it resulted in a bloody and cruel civil war, in which millions were slain, it cleared our country of traitors and enabled the people under the guidance of intelligence to defeat all its external foes.

"While India, the Colonies, and the United States of America were never actually at war with the mother country, on several occasions they nearly came to blows. Fortunately, the fact of their being situated far apart, together with the kindly feeling arising from kindred race, prevented such a fatal issue taking place. Besides, they all had their own troubles at home; they were all suffering from the same state of misgovernment; all had committed the fatal error of placing the control of the State in the hands of the ignorant, and all had come to the same goal. Like England, all had tried the principle of equality and fraternity, and all had proved it to be but a snare and a delusion.

My Specimen, a nation can only be truly governed by its intelligence. An intellectual standard is the only standard of nobility that can ever endure, as all the people of this era found to their cost.

"After these terribly cruel civil wars amongst all the English speaking races; after all this bloodshed, and all this starvation and sorrow, there came a calm. A monarchy was again established in the year 3000. The Colonies again joined the British Empire. India gave in her allegiance once more, and they were again a united and comparatively happy people. The great reduction of population, caused by the wars and famines, that swept away multitudes of the weakly and diseased, resulted in again leaving room for those that had survived. Universal suffrage was done away with, and an educational qualification introduced. No man or woman, it was enacted, could vote for a member of parliament except the elector had passed a stiff examination. Every facility was given to teach the people, but all who wished to have the privilege of taking part in the election of parliament must be educated; nor did this safeguard for intellectual government stop with the electors. It was also enacted that all members of parliament must be men of the highest education, and they were also required to pass an examination of great severity in all subjects that men of education should be familiar with.

"In the year 3334 a most interesting event took place, and that was the union of the United States of America with this country. The Americans, like ourselves, came through terrible trials in the shape of civil wars, and other like calamities, arising from misgovernment by the ignorant. Even in your day there were indications of what was in store for this great nation. They led the way in making politics a trade; they led the way in introducing the payment of congressmen, thus lowering a duty that should be held as an honour by the citizens of every nation, to a means of acquiring gain. This degeneration became so bad in that country that the mere mention of the name of congressman, a senator, or even of president, was sufficient to brand its bearer as being a man that could not be trusted. I have not the time to explain all that took place in America, but it was practically a counterpart of our experiences in England, only much more intense. The result was the same as with the English. The intelligent part of the people revolting came to the rescue of the nation, and manfully did their painful duty. They, like our fathers, saw that Republicanism was a sham. They saw that while they had not a king to rule them, they had a man in power who, owing to the degraded state of the political world, was now invariably an all-powerful, ambitious, uneducated and unprincipled being that no one could respect, and who was supported and kept in office by men as bad as himself. With what feelings of regret did the American people of that terrible time look back and pray for the return of the political purity that existed in the days of Washington, or even in the days of Lincoln and Grant. At last the electorate saw the misery that was in store for them, and felt that, while they might differ among themselves, there was one duty expected of them above all others, to protect and maintain the honour of their great nation, and try to educate and elevate the people. They had had enough of Republicanism now. They learned by bitter experience that a movable centre like a president, that had to be elected every three years, only meant opening up a way to ambitious men to usurp the power of a king under another name. They at last saw, as our fathers had seen and proved, that a nation must have some fixed centre for government to move around. No matter how small that centre may be, if it exists, it prevents any scheming man that gets into a prominent position in the government of his country from assuming the power of a crowned head—a power that under such circumstances is sure to be supported by unprincipled followers for the purpose of gain.

"The British Empire in the year 3354 consisted of Great Britain, Ireland, North America, Australasia, India and Africa, and it remains the same to this day.

" The central government, as I told you, now sits at the great government halls not far from the ruins of London. The rest of the empire is divided into two hundred local governments, which practically manage their own affairs, simply reporting what they do to the Central Government, to whom they are responsible for local management. Each of these local governments sends three representatives to the Central Government ; thus forming an assembly of six hundred members, who deal with imperial matters. This Assembly again elects from their number sixty members, who form the Upper House, which corresponds with what was called the House of Lords in your day.

" In your day such an arrangement as this would have been impracticable. But as science advanced the means of inter-communication improved, the result being, that now, with our speed of travelling, there is no inconvenience whatever. So, my Specimen, you see the whole English speaking peoples of the world, that were known as such, and as dependencies of England in your day, were formed into one great United Kingdom. But while all these reforms were steps in the right direction, their troubles, as you will see later on, were not at an end, although their position was much improved by the many changes that had taken place under the government of the intellectual party.

"Before going further with my sketch of the history of the past, I must here give you a little information as to the causes of the great change you have noticed in our language. The confusion of tongues on earth caused much inconvenience to all nations; this was aggravated by the improved and rapid means of travelling that were introduced. By universal consent all the governments of any importance in the world enacted that there should be one, and only one, language used throughout the globe. The next difficulty that arose was to fix on the language that was to be adopted. Delegates met to discuss this subject, and debated it for six months, but could not come to an agreement. At last, it was resolved that no existing language, taken as a whole, was suitable. It was determined therefore to create a new one; and seeing that the English speaking people at this date were the most numerous, it was determined to call it modern English.

"As you may imagine the formation of a new language was no small task. Delegates from all nations met, and discussed every word in the new vocabulary. It took them over twenty years to get this completed. The system followed was to select the most expressive words from all known languages, making it a rule to have a separate word for everything, allowing no two words to have the same meaning or more than one meaning.

"As it was not possible to introduce a new language without much preparation and time, it was agreed that twenty years should be allowed for instructing teachers, while other twenty years were allowed for teaching the young. But after this date, the new language was to be adopted as the universal language of the world.

"Fortunately, at this period and for some centuries thereafter, peace and industry reigned on the earth, otherwise this great change in the language of the world could not have been accomplished. As it was, however, all the world's governments adhered religiously to their enactment, and after two hundred years the new language was so thoroughly established, that the older languages became as in the past, only open to the more educated, who study them as dead languages.

"To proceed with the rest of the history of the world, without first explaining to you some curious changes that came over the people's convictions in two essential points, would only mean relating events without giving the causes from which many of them sprung. These changes of convictions were on the questions of religion, and of food and drink.

"As to religion, the world had come through many many changes. After years and years of experimental teaching, and the introduction of endless forms of worship, endless doctrines, endless beliefs, and non-beliefs, the people of the earth came back again to Christianity (from which they had wandered) about the year of our Lord 3260, and we still adhere to it. Our religion is now the Christian religion in its pure simplicity. We have done away with all sectarian dogmas which were purely the creations of man. I think you will admit that in your day man thought a great deal too much about these dogmas, and in fighting and squabbling over them they forgot what real religion was, although they called themselves devout Christians. The Romanists contended for the Pope and his Priests, and said (believing it to be true, no doubt) that the only way to Heaven was through them, assisted by the Virgin Mary. Their great dogma was that a Priest had the power of relieving his fellow creature of his responsibility to his God. The Episcopalians established man-created dogmas, which they said had better be observed, if you wished an easy road to Heaven. The Methodists were bitter against the Episcopalians because of these church rules or dogmas, and yet they set up another code, which they declared the right and true one to follow. The Baptists again said that no man was baptised unless he was fully immersed, as if this could be a question of vital importance. The Presbyterians said that Presbyterianism was the true way Heavenward. They again, on some silly man-created laws for church government, split into a number of sects, all bitter in their feelings toward one another through some absurd difference of opinion regarding these questions that were really of little moment.

"All said that they believed in the doctrine of the Christian religion, which is salvation through Christ; and still they neglected Christ's teaching, that is simplicity itself: 'Love God, and do unto all men, as you would they should do unto you.' Yet with this precept constantly before them, and with this doctrine of love for God and your neighbour continually on their lips, you will admit that they as continually abused one another, and even went to war and spilt their brother's blood about these miserable creations of their own narrow minds, crying aloud all the time that they were doing this for the sake of God, thereby disregarding all that was taught by the Master they professed to serve. This was bad in your day, but shortly after your time things became much worse. The people got so narrow-minded that dogmas became the entire religion, and Christ's teachings were entirely overlooked. Then the freethinkers came to the front as the natural result of these conflicting ideas. With all these experiences before them, my Specimen, our fathers saw that if they were to have a religion at all, they must strip off all creeds and dogmas created by man, and adhere to the constant and oft-repeated instructions of God's Son. This they tried to do, and the result has been most satisfactory, having now worked well for over two thousand years. We believe in 'Love for one another, absolute justice to all, and veneration for that mighty, all-powerful and incomprehensible Great Being who created and who controls the universe with love, mercy, and truth;—a Being so wonderfully great in His omnipotence, that we are a thousand times less in comparison to Him, than the smallest microbe which floats about in the blood of the most insignificant little insect, is to this globe on which we live. As I told you, if any one of our community through great learning, or great intellectual power, or through adulation begins to think he is greater or nobler than he is, we take him to the Observatory and he comes away with a true perception of his own nothingness. He is thus imbued with a larger desire to learn more from the inexhaustible field of unexplored knowledge that is yet but barely entered upon. I sometimes think, my Specimen, that should the world last for tens of thousands of years, its inhabitants will after that time feel that they know less than we now think we know, because as knowledge and intelligence increase, the greater that increase is, the greater will be man's ability to realize his own littleness. In your day some great thinkers presumed to state that there was no God, but when greater knowledge came to mankind this state of presumptuous thought was banished, I hope, for ever."

PART VI.

"I THINK, my Specimen, we have now had enough history for one day, so meanwhile I shall postpone this subject; as time permits I will revert to it again. We shall now talk about the present for a little.

"It is most interesting to read the writings of the past and study the changes of thought and sentiment that took place in the various decades of the life of our nation. At one period, the thoughts of our fathers seemed to be exalted and pure in tone, while at another, we find all these noble aspirations gone, and replaced by ideas and thoughts that are immoral and degrading. This changing reminds me of a number of great ocean waves, rolling on the shore. At one moment, you see them clear, pure and beautiful, at another, they are dim and muddy, having stirred up and become polluted by contact with the bottom's dirt and filth. But as decade after decade passes, the tone of our fathers' writings has gradually improved, until at the present day immorality of thought has ceased to exist, and purity and wisdom reign in its place. Not, my Specimen, that I want you for a moment to believe that we have now arrived at perfection—that is a goal we can never attain. And I think it is well it is so, for had we not got some greater and nobler object always in view, we should be like the climber of mountains who had nothing left for his ambition to attain—after having climbed the highest, he must either remain on the top or descend again to the level from which he made his start. Our mountain is one whose top we can never attain. We will get higher and higher, but as mortals, we can never hope to reach the summit.

"We differ much in duration of life from the people of your period. I think I am right in saying that in those days the average life of men was about forty years. Some, it is true, lived to one hundred, but these were I believe very rare exceptions. Now we live to an average of one hundred and fifty years, while many reach two hundred. The death rate among our young people is very low. Our children remain helpless much longer than those of the ancients, rarely beginning to walk before they are three years old, greater intelligence bringing this burthen with it. A man does not arrive at maturity until he has reached thirty years, while a woman arrives at maturity about her twenty-eighth year. Our marriage laws are very strict. No man can have more than one wife during his life, to have a second wife is a terrible crime in our eyes. He must not marry until he is forty, nor can any woman marry until she is thirty-five. A woman rarely has more than three children, and never more than four.

"In the selection of husbands and wives, young people are left very much to themselves, subject to only two conditions which are, a presumed educational equality and non-relationship. Both the man and the woman must have passed the highest educational standard of their class, this being the only test of nobility that has any weight with our people. If a man or woman neglects this law in the selection of wife or husband, he or she loses social caste and is degraded in the eyes of the nation. Love, we believe to be a true, pure and holy feeling, a love for the spirit and intellect rather than that carnal love for the body and worldly riches that was so prevalent in your day, and for thousands of years thereafter. By strictly adhering to this law of selection, we find that the offspring of intellectual people are more susceptible to develop an improved intellectual power. Marriage is not allowed between relations. The experience we had before us, of the evils arising from marriages between near relations in previous generations, which, without exception, produced and perpetuated diseased bodies, and decrepit and idiotic minds, caused this law to be enacted and rigidly adhered to. It is an understood unwritten law, that the further removed the husband and wife are in relationship the more pleased the parents and the state will be.

People afflicted with disease are not allowed to marry. Love of parents is strongly developed in our race; and our love for the country of our birth is intense. Parents devote themselves to their children until they have arrived at maturity, and children have the highest veneration for their parents.

"Men and women can compete for all ordinary occupations, and they mix together with the greatest freedom. Yet immorality is unknown, the fact being that intelligence has gained such a control over our people's passions that everything is held subservient to it."

At this stage of my friend's description of his fellows, I ventured to ask, "What object can your people have for which to live and work? They do not eat, therefore, it cannot be for food or the pleasures of the palate. All garments appear to me the same, therefore it cannot be for the love of clothing. They don't seem to use money, therefore it cannot be from a desire to amass wealth." He replied, "You forget, my Specimen, that intellectual food for the mind is of more value to us than the miserable food you used to cram into that sink of iniquity, your stomach. You forget that to us mental raiment is worth more than all the clothing that in your day was so much prized and sought after. You forget that we have no use for that bauble money, that you sought for, fought for, and for which you degraded yourselves. You forget that the rays thrown out by one brilliant thought, or one great conception, are possessed of more grandeur and beauty, for the present generation, than all the diamonds and rubies that were so much prized by the ancients. But while we are more alive to the beauties of thought and the gems of intellect, than to any of the so-called jewels, clothing and other treasures of the ancients, we do not despise the beauties of these gems or of this raiment. We look on gold and silver much as we look on lovely flowers without life. We admire and prize the grand effects that can be produced by their artistic arrangements and settings. These effects we study and arrange in great halls of instruction, the property of the nation. No individual possesses or cares to possess these things; he considers them curious, interesting, and beautiful, and no more.

"The simple uniform garments we adopt serve all our wants. If women on fête days wish to adorn themselves they use flowers, which have a charm of simplicity and beauty about them, far beyond gems, that—could their history be told—would reveal a deplorable chapter of crimes committed for their sakes. Think of the tyrants they have adorned; think of the immorality they have bedecked with borrowed and deceitful rays of sparkling beauty; think of the envy they have engendered in the souls of generations; think of the deceits, the intrigues, the blasphemies, the miseries, the murders, and the degradations that have been enacted for them, and then say is their record deserving of recognition or respect?

"On the other hand, when our women adorn themselves with flowers, they adorn themselves with beautiful new born beauty, short lived, it is true, but pure and free from the curse of a horrible record of crime.

"Yes, my Specimen, when we look back on the history of the past, and remember what a shameful part the cupidity of man caused gold, silver, and the precious stones to play in the world's history, we cannot help coupling and associating man's worst instincts with these otherwise harmless substances. They are truly in themselves possessed of singular beauty, but this beauty is so dimmed and disfigured by the doings of men, that we cannot see one apart from the other. We live for none of these; we live for a more true and lasting pleasure."

PART VII.

HAVING now spent a considerable time relating the things of the past, and instructing me in things relating to the present, the Recorder told me to retire to rest, so I lay down on a couch and went to sleep again. The next day I awoke and found that I was quite alone. I lay quietly, thinking and wondering for a long time. At last the Recorder came to me, and said he would again begin to instruct me as soon as I had had my morning meal. Finding this on a tray beside my couch, I got up and refreshed myself. As soon as I had had enough the Recorder began :—

"You are surprised to find that we exist without food, and that we do not live for its sake. How this came about is a long story, and I feel that it is now time you should have an explanation of the reasons and causes of this beneficial change in the nature of mankind.

When man was created, the necessity for other food than that supplied through his lungs was essential, because at that period the atmosphere that surrounded the earth had not sufficient sustaining power of itself to maintain the human frame, and to make up for the waste entailed by the exertions of the mind and body. But the Creator never intended that the faculty of drawing sustenance from food should be abused in the way it was. The simple fruits of the earth were sufficient for all man's wants, and even these were only to be used in moderation; but after long generations he became more and more wedded to eating and drinking. He was not content with the simple fruits of the earth, nor was he content with water for his drink. He, indeed, appears to have possessed less wisdom in this respect than the brute creation, that have from the beginning, even down to the present day, been content with that which was provided for them. Man, by misusing his thinking and reasoning power, apparently educated himself to gloat over food, and to devote his intelligence to the production of new foods and drinks. His field of thought seems to have been confined or directed in a large measure to indulging the desires of his appetite. His greatest object in life became a wish for the means of gratifying these tastes. His object in storing up wealth was to make this over-indulgence possible, and the greater his means the more he went in for carousals. The more dishes he could give to his guests, the more he was thought of. Not content with simple nourishment prepared from fruit, or even flesh, he debased that genius of invention, with which he was endowed, by inventing novelties, and educated his palate to the belief that each new dish was more delicious than its predecessor. In his desire to gratify artificial thirst, he became still more debased. He was not content with the purest water. He was not content with the juice of fruits, he must needs have something novel. He invented intoxicating drinks, he found that they exhilarated his spirits for the moment;

he found at this stage of partial intoxication that he was elevated above himself. It was a temporary pleasure. He continued to indulge, and gradually became stupefied and debased in the eyes of his own intelligence. Still he could not refrain from this infatuation. He gorged himself again with food, and he again debased himself with drink which never was intended for mankind. Man acted in such an insane way that it became doubtful whether it was an advantage to him to be possessed of reasoning power and intelligence. The animal creation that had neither the one nor the other were possessed of an instinct which so controlled their appetites, that no power could move or cause them to overstep the rules of nature. This state of abuse went on from generation to generation, growing worse and worse until, in your day, no man, even of the meanest habits, could sit down to a meal, if the component parts had not come from all the quarters of the earth. You must well remember that no great meetings, even of the learned societies in those days, took place without being accompanied by monstrous feeding and drinking matches.

"Those who termed themselves abstainers were abstainers only from intoxicants. They reviled those who took wine or spirits in any form, yet these very men would cram themselves with all conceivable kinds of food. They would spare no trouble, or what they called money, to make these great feeding displays. They truly saw the evils of drinking intoxicants, but they overlooked the evils of over-eating, the intemperance in consuming food. The result of this terrible abuse of appetite and intellect had a very baneful influence on the world's inhabitants. No nation was free from it; no class was averse to it; all inclined in the same direction. For want of opportunity and means, some people living in lonely districts were of necessity kept out of the way of temptation, but the credit is not due to their want of inclination, but rather to a want of opportunity. The effects of this abnormal desire for food and drink were not however without some results that eventually did good. The desire for indulging these tastes engendered a desire for the attainment of wealth. This desire gave birth to enterprise; enterprise led to adventure; adventure brought about the discovery of distant lands. Then a great trade arose with all parts of the globe; population increased; people must be fed with dainties. They were not to be satisfied with the products of their own countries, so great fleets were engaged for the object of satisfying this craving. This indulgence, of what we now see were depraved tastes, must be catered for. Good came, because the desires of the appetite created the necessity for improved transport. The medical science was also stimulated. Over-indulgence in food and drink created a host of new and painful diseases. These signs of decay called forth medical and surgical invention, and a closer study of the human frame and its organs, which ultimately worked out an interesting and beneficial result by demonstrating to mankind that if this unwholesome mode of living was persisted in, the human race must come to a disgraceful and untimely end. Terrible in our eyes is the knowledge that such a state of things had ever existed, because we know from the experience of the past its baneful effects on hundreds of generations. Men and women, who ought to have adorned the earth, and been as beautiful in their way as the most lovely of God's works, became a disgrace to humanity. They were a trouble to themselves and to all around them. To fully describe the excesses entered into by the majority of the people that came after your era would be as disgusting as it is unnecessary. You must have seen enough of this abuse in your own day to enable you to judge as to whether our way is the right way or not, my Specimen.

"While there was this immorality, while everything moral and intellectual seemed to be on the road to destruction, there was still some good left in the world. Although the common observer might, if judging from the great preponderance of evil, think that all was hopeless and that all was lost, a germ of good still remained. There still, fortunately, existed many great and good minds that never ceased, morning noon or night, to preach morality, truth, and temperance to the people. Many lost heart and gave up in despair, but still their places were taken by others who continued the good fight from age to age. For a time, the new order of things led our ancestors of this date to think that everything was improving. The people had come through great trials and were inclined to listen to the advice of men of learning. The reduction of population was a great relief to those that were left. In country districts the people began to grow their own food, and rear their own meat. They lived moderately, and became much more happy and contented. In the cities also, the people were better provided for. The great mass went in for education, devoting themselves to it, and the affairs of our nation went on smoothly for many years. It was during this period that the first practical steps were taken to establish the universal language that you have heard spoken. About this date also a new sect was formed, its members consisting of the leading intellects of America, the Colonies, and Great Britain. This sect saw and believed that all the troubles of the earth were due to excessive eating and drinking. They stated, and stated, as we now see truly, that if eating and drinking could be dispensed with, man's intellectual power would increase, and permanent morality would be ensured. What they advocated was—First of all to do away with the use of all luxuries, and then gradually to reduce the amount of ordinary food. This body became very large and powerful, and after being established one hundred years it was found that their numbers comprised one fourth the American and English people. Their compeers were astonished to see the very small amount of food they found sufficient to sustain life. They contended that it was God's will when He created man that He should take just sufficient food for sustenance but no more; and that what food man did take must be of the very simplest kind. These men found themselves, after living in this way, intellectually stronger, and while their physical strength was not at first so great as those that continued to eat largely, still, knowing as they did that mental power was the power that must conquer, the members of this body held firmly to their principles. They had no spare flesh on their bodies, but they were thoroughly healthy, and possessed joyful spirits. They found that they wanted but little money to supply their simple needs, and from their personal experience they saw that one-fourth of the food usually consumed by man was sufficient for their sustenance. They further proved that the cost of their food did not come to one-fourth the sum an ordinary individual required. They demonstrated that by reducing the consumption and using only the simplest kinds, the saving to the country would be something enormous. This doctrine suited the great body of the people very well, but the merchants and middlemen, who lived by barter, began to see that their trade was going. If people could exist, they said, on one-fourth of the food that was ordinarily required, then they could do with less than one-fourth of the merchants and middlemen. Strong opposition was started in the cities to this body that was doing so much good, consequently, in the cities the new sect made but small progress, except amongst the higher and educated classes. But in the country districts of America, Britain, and the Colonies, the teaching of this new order was taking a great hold on the people, and combined with the progress of higher education, greatly improved their social condition. As for the cities, from what I have read, it is evident that they did not advance much. There was something so entirely antagonistic to the purity of nature in the city life of the ancients that it seemed almost impossible to elevate the inhabitants. The herding of so many human beings together in such confined spaces, and in ill-ventilated houses, away from the elevating influences of country life, made the task of reform almost hopeless. Then at this period of the world's history, the besetting sin—a craving for money and gain—lowered the minds of the people who resided in such places to a much greater degree than it did to the minds of those that lived in the country. All these reasons tended to act against the doctrines of this great sect of reformers; still they continued to labour, and after 400 years' continuous work, they numbered fully half the earth's population. One of their great apostles had in the beginning prophesied that theirs would in course of time be the universal belief of the world. This prophecy has come true, though it came about in a manner that was never contemplated. Continual living on short diet, we are told, had a beneficial effect on these people. History informs us that they could endure longer hours of labour; that they had brighter and clearer thinking powers; that they possessed greater determination; and that they took a much wider and far-seeing view of all subjects than the free eaters and drinkers did. Although not physically strong, they were the leaders in every great undertaking. If the country was at war, they were to be found in the van-guard, while in all movements for the advance of science, art, and industry, they were ahead also. That such a large body should exist and adhere to what were in those days considered by many to be strange notions, was a curious phenomenon, and one that afterwards proved to be a design of Providence to gradually prepare a people that might live under an altered condition of things. Now, my Specimen, as I have devoted a long time to your instruction, and as I fear this dry record will tire you if you get too much of it at a time, I will give over for the present. I must visit my private abode to-night, and shall take you with me and introduce you to my wife and daughter as well as to some other ladies of position. You will then have an opportunity of conversing with ladies of our day. It will be a change for you, and a pleasant one. We shall go on our journey to-morrow;

as occasion offers, I shall continue my instructive narrative. If I told you the history of our nation fully, as I mentioned before, it would be an endless task; therefore, I must be as brief as possible, and pass over long periods of time with a few words."

The Recorder now went through his department to give further instructions, while I again accompanied him. Everything this man did was done in a quiet, yet thoroughly masterful manner, and I began to hold him almost in awe, so great was my opinion of his power of penetration and command. But in spite of my respect for him, now and then his ideas of what a true Venus should be had the effect of lowering him in my estimation, at least as an artist.

We now went outside the building, and met all the officials and clerks, both men and women. The Recorder remarked:—"It is the closing time; the day's work is over. We will allow them to go first, as, having to take you with me, I can't make as much speed as they do, and the consequence is, we might be run down amid such a crowd." So we waited and saw them all start. There were men and women of all ages in those strange simple white costumes, all with the same great thoughtful faces, great heads and eyes. First they walked for about thirty yards, quite quietly, then all at once they threw out a little ballast, and began to trip away in hundreds in their odd hop, skip and a jump fashion, at a marvellous speed, passing over everything. It was the very funniest sight I had ever seen. The Recorder looked at me saying:—"That flight represents a considerable power," and continuing said, "I think I will couple up your leg weights, my Specimen, and see how you get on generating your own power." On saying this, he secured a small bright wire to each leg weight and passed it over my shoulder down the front of my body to the weight on the opposite leg. When this was done he joined the two wires where they crossed in the front and back of my body by a pair of little clasps like a brooch, about the size of a florin, and twice as thick. When this was completed, I felt the same kind of pleasant glow going through me as that experienced when the Recorder caught hold of me, but in a modified degree. I told the Recorder this, and he said, "That is all right, my Specimen, you are improving. You will soon be able to dispense with food, and then you can do without those disgusting digestive details of yours." I began to think my fate was now sealed, that he would not rest until he had cut my liver and other digestive organs out, but I was reassured when I remembered his promise to me after leaving the medical museum.

"We will now move on, my Specimen," he said. "Those wires should be concealed by your garments, but they will do as they are for a first trial. I will have to guide you until you get accustomed to your new mode of travel." He took me gently by the arm, and off we started. Had it not been that he held me I should most certainly have gone heads over heels for all time. I seemed to be alive all over. My legs would spring one way, while my hands and arms would go another. I felt that I could have done anything—my body was all vitality and power—but the annoyance was that I had no control over this power, yet it was most enjoyable. The sense of vigour and energy within me as realized during the trip that followed these preparations was something far beyond description. There is no illustration that I could give you, Reader, which would make you realize what I felt during those moments. The Recorder said:—"The instruments that you have christened leg weights, and that we in a measure use as leg weights, are generators—they collect power from the atmosphere. We place them on our ancles to make the lower extremities of our bodies heavy. When so placed they act as ballast to keep us erect.

"I caused you to wear them first without being connected and made active, to accustom you to their weight. I see that you feel them rather powerful, but when your mind is educated and your will is strong enough to control them, you will have no difficulty. Besides I am giving off some of my power to you through holding your arm; but here we are.". At this moment we came to a stand in front of a beautiful simple little villa, surrounded by a flower garden laid out in exquisite taste.

PART VIII.

THE house was not more than thirty feet square and one storey high. On a seat at the side of the door were seated two ladies. One was old and grey-haired, but possessed of a beautifully expressive face; the other was much younger, with a face of great intelligence. And oh! such lovely features and such eyes! The depth of feeling and penetration existing in them was something extraordinary; they were perfectly liquid, and sparkled anew with every change of expression. As we alighted, the ladies rose and advanced to meet us. I now saw that they were tall and slender, and I thought that if they could only reduce their heads and draw in their chests, they would be the most charming females I had ever met. The Recorder simply bowed to them, and leading me forward said:—

"My Specimen, this is my wife and this is my daughter." They evidently knew who I was and all about me. I began to feel very small and thought that these people had a better knowledge of me than I had of myself, and then I thought of that nasty model. No doubt these ladies had had explained to them all about my horrid liver, my useless lungs, my fatty heart, and my abominable abdominal regions. Only think of one's entrails being made the subject of the small talk of a great nation. It was something too humiliating to think of, and before these ladies I did feel humbled and ashamed, I can assure you.

We now entered the villa, the ladies leading the way. I could see at a glance the arrangement of the house. It was simply divided into four rooms about fifteen feet square. The door was in the corner of the building opening into one of the rooms, which formed a reception or sitting room, having windows in two sides. There was a door, I noticed, directly opposite to the entrance that evidently led to the room that formed the opposite corner of the house. Other two doors alongside this corner door led into the other two rooms. The furniture of the reception-room was exceedingly simple, but very artistic. The chairs and tables looked so light and flimsy that I did not believe they could carry the weight of a person sitting on them. I felt sure that the least thing would crush the table. All sat down but myself. The Recorder, divining my fear, said, "Come here, my Specimen," and saying so he leaped lightly on a chair. I expected to see the whole thing collapse, but the chair stood the shock without a tremble. He then said;—"Hold out your hand, my Specimen." I did so, and with a slight leap he stepped on it and balanced himself. I scarcely felt his weight, which I expected to be considerable. If he had been made hollow and lightly stuffed with cotton wool he would have weighed more than he did. Seeing my astonishment, he said:—

"You see, we are very strong, our muscles are as strong and as light as silk. Our mode of living has entirely altered the component parts of our bodies. The pressure of our atmosphere has also much to do with our weight. In your time your bodies consisted of about eighty per cent. of water, as you required a large amount of moisture to enable you to exist. With our atmosphere and with our mode of living we require almost no moisture. Our muscles, our nerves, and our bones are made of a material that is light but very strong. I cannot give you a better illustration to convey to your mind a conception of this substance, than by telling you that we are composed of a material somewhat of the nature of silk. Our brains, our very bones, consist of the same material surrounded by gases. Each nerve, each sinew, each artery, each vein, floats, as it were, in a casing consisting of cells filled with gases. Our lungs are composed of a series of cells made of the finest net-work of gauzy material, through which the atmosphere is inhaled, and the nutriment therein is thus conveyed to the blood. You will now, my Specimen, understand why we are so light, so transparent, and yet possessed of such power. While you have retained the shape that you once possessed you are really composed now of much the same material that we are: in fact, you are no longer in your old body, you are in a new body, that is in process of being provided with new organs, otherwise you could not live and move as you do. Your spirit is the old spirit, but that is all. You have yet, as I said before, to reduce the size of your digestive organs, and to increase your lung power, then with patience and education you will become as one of ourselves, because, my Specimen, I see from what you have said and from what is passing through your mind, that you are possessed of more than ordinary intelligence for one whose mind was moulded under ancient influences that were both depraved and baneful."

I was becoming more and more astonished with all that I had seen and heard, but somehow through life I had the faculty of suiting myself and my ideas to the situations in which I was placed. Whether I was alive or dead now, I could not say, but I began to feel more and more at home in this new state of existence. I saw less that was strange in the figures and costumes, the habits and the customs of the strange people I was now among. Whether this change in my ideas was caused by living in this new atmosphere, or whether it was caused by my intercourse with the Recorder and his family, I know not, but that a change was coming over me was quite evident. When we came to a stand in front of the villa, and before the Recorder released me from his hold, he slipped the little connector off the cross wires at my back. After this was done I had control over my movements, and consequently could move about the room with freedom. I saw that the walls were beautifully painted, representing groups of flowers with an odd bird or butterfly here and there. Indeed the whole room and its furniture was in the most complete harmony—a study of art.

While I was looking out from the window I saw a group of white specks in the distance. Thinking these were gulls I pointed them out to the ladies who were seated near me. The elderly lady said :—

"My dear sir, you must be short of vision. Cannot you see that those are ladies ? In fact sir, these are some friends coming to see us; they are only a few miles away now, and will be here immediately."

She had scarcely ceased speaking when they arrived. The party numbered four—three elderly ladies and one girl, the latter being I should say about twenty-eight years old. I at once recognised one of the new comers as the lady who was taking part in the debate when I entered the House of Commons. She was truly a grand specimen of modern humanity. I was introduced to them all by name, but as none of the names were familiar to me I have not been able to retain them.

The Recorder asked me to give them a short account of the age in which I lived. Feeling complimented, I stood up, and laid my views of the state of politics, science, art, and manufacture in my day before them. I told them all about our immense naval fleets and their armament. I described fully our great mercantile marine. I gave them some ideas about our commerce, and, being proud of my profession, I extolled the excellence of the Schools of Art in 1888. Whether I was justified in doing so or not is rather doubtful, as our schools tended towards the same fault of preciseness and want of freedom that I complained of in theirs. I venture to think that I am a fairly good speaker, and I spoke to these people with considerable force of words but in a whisper. They heard me with great attention and politeness all through, and when I sat down they came to me individually, and said it was to them a great treat to hear me speak with such force in advocating the fallacies of the ancients. They now entered into a discussion amongst themselves about the habits and customs of people in my day. They seemed to know everything about them. I was highly entertained and pleased with all I heard. Things were discussed with the greatest intelligence and fairness. The gormandising habits of my fellows, and their greed for gain came in for some hard hits, which I felt were so entirely deserved, that I had not one word to say in their defence.

In the conversation and arguments I noticed that the ladies referred all questions of doubt to the Recorder. When a question was put to him he always reasoned it out exhaustively, giving full and ample reasons for his decisions. If any of the party did not agree, they stated their objections, but after further argument, which was carried on in a very friendly way, he invariably proved the accuracy of his decision. I was much surprised at the able manner in which the ladies put their arguments forward, their method was so unlike what I had previously been accustomed to. Perhaps I was prejudiced against them, as in my time those ladies we termed blue-stockings made one feel, that while perhaps they had a certain amount of knowledge, they believed they knew much more than they did, which caused them to be dogmatic, and at times over-bearing. These ladies, however, were not dogmatic—a fault that is objectionable in men, but quite unbearable in women. Great minds are always the most truly humble, their knowledge being great and their reading of all things broad and large-minded, they see and despise that little-mindedness that gives birth to such faults as those exhibited by the half-educated.

The Recorder having suggested that the ladies should give us some music, his wife went into one of the adjoining rooms and brought out two curious looking instruments such as I had seen in the college; keeping one herself she handed the other to one of the lady visitors. They first played a short plaintive melody without any flourishes, runs, or variations, while the rest of the party joining sang in perfect harmony. All sang very softly and with deep feeling. It was more like the music of angels than the music of this earth, so sweet, soft, and melodious was it. We were favoured with a number of other melodies, all of which were quite new to me. After these were finished I ventured to express the delight I had experienced while they performed. The Recorder's daughter now sang a solo, her mother accompanying her. This song was sung in old English, and was evidently intended for my special benefit. It was a song in praise of intelligence. At one time it was low and sweet, at another, full of spirit and fire. The girl threw her whole soul into it. You could see from the nervous quivering of her muscles that each note and word came from her very heart. For my part I sat amazed and entranced by the beauty and grandeur of the execution. I forgot the large head and expanded chest, thinking only of the music and its wonderful influence. While I sat thus admiring this girl, my ideas of the perfect proportions for a Venus faded away. I honestly believe if I had had a canvas I should at once have started to paint a true Venus after the model before me. How this was I cannot say, possibly the influences by which I was surrounded were fast altering my ideas, yes, and my very nature. I even began to think that my form was altering also. I had not noticed a mirror anywhere to enable me to see what I was like; the only reproduction of myself that I had seen was that horrid model, dressed in my old tweed suit. Our visitors soon departed, the Recorder and his family going to the door to see them off. They simply bowed to us all, as they left. I went to the window and saw them trip away. They were soon out of sight. The Recorder now told his wife to bring refreshment, at the same time explaining to me that I still required a little food. I felt quite ashamed of myself; but I must say that what the Recorder stated was true. I did feel that I wanted something. Some fruit and water were brought, and all three sat and looked at me eating with evident curiosity and interest, each taking a sip of water, by way of keeping me company. The ladies now retired, leaving me alone with the Recorder who came and sat beside me. He said :—

"My Specimen, to-morrow we start to see the seats of Government in Britain. I may tell you that the ruined city near to us is Glasgow; the river you saw is the Clyde." When I heard this, I at once recognised my native city, but it must have grown tremendously before its day of destruction came. When I knew it, it was not more than one-tenth the size that the ruined city must have been, yet I could recognise many of the general features in a dim, indistinct way. The Recorder went on :—

"I shall take you past Edinburgh, Newcastle, Manchester, London, Liverpool, and then we shall return here. We can do all this overland travelling in the same way and by means of the same power that we use every day, none of the distances are great, and there are no large sheets of water to pass over.

When we go longer journeys together, we shall require either to embark in the naval or aerial packets. Those cities I have mentioned, like Glasgow, are now but ruins. They exist no longer as cities, and are left in this state of desolation as evidences of the folly of the ancients, who used the intelligence that was given them by the Creator to banish His works of beauty and over-run the country with their own smoke-begrimed productions." I here said to my companion that in my day we were proud of our great cities, of our great industries, and of the great strides we made in civilisation, and that while proud of these, most of our people could also enjoy Nature. Industry, I explained to him, became a necessity as we had to live by it; we had no other means of getting food, drink and clothing. "Yes," he replied, "I know all this, but, as I explained before, you abused your desire for food, and you debased your senses by drink; you got proud of your cities and factories, your fleets and your telegraphy. While there was undoubtedly considerable merit in many of your inventions, while there were many great ideas conceived and carried out by many of your great minds, yet these conceptions and these undertakings were so mixed with the vices of self-esteem, greed and avarice, that while producing some good, this good was obliterated by crimes that engendered misery, immorality, and degradation, that reduced humanity to a lower level than that of the reptile creation, and eventually brought a large proportion of the people of the earth to the terrible judgment that was inflicted upon them. But I will later on explain to you, my Specimen, how all this came about. Let us now retire to rest as it is getting late; we must be up betimes in the morning." He showed me to my room, which was that entered by the door in the corner opposite the entrance door. The furniture consisted of a chair, a table and a couch, and there was a shallow bath in the floor filled with water. The walls were decorated with paintings. Although it was now quite dark outside, the room was as light as day.

The light came from a disc in the ceiling, and the Recorder explained that by pulling a string that hung by the wall I could reduce the light at will. This was effected by closing a louvre that was arranged to cover the luminous disc. I had previously noticed that the reception-room was lighted in the same way. He said "Good-night," and feeling tired I lay down and slept the sleep of the just, not even waiting to undress.

PART IX.

IN the morning I awoke very early, quite refreshed. From my window I could see the sun just peeping over the distant hills. While I lay thus awake I thought over all I had seen, of my own old world times, and of all that had taken place there. I wondered what had become of my old friends and companions. I wondered if I would ever see them again; I wondered, if such was my lot, what I would think of them and their surroundings. After living with the people I was now among, I feared that I would despise my former friends, and that I would detect sin, and greed, and selfishness in all they did. I feared that in conversing with anyone my first thought would be, "Is he trying to cheat me? What selfish end has he in view?" I could not think of such things any longer; they were too painful, too distressing. So I bounded out of bed, without thinking what I was doing. I lighted on the floor with a leap, and rebounded, hopping about like a ball; I soon, however, came to rest in the centre of the floor with all thoughts of the old world, old friends, and old deceits dashed out of me. I fully realised now that I was amid new scenes, in what was to me a new world, and among a new people—a people so full of interest, so full of wisdom, so devoted to science and art, and apparently so devoid of vice, that I believed that the human race had at last arrived at something nearly approaching perfection, if not perfection itself. After this reflection, I got into my bath, had a refreshing roll on the water's surface, and then began to dress.

It now for the first time occurred to me that I had lain down with my garment and my leg weights on, while I now saw that they were on the chair, and that a light coverlet had been placed over me. This made me exclaim: "These are truly a strange and impertinent people, they have been having another congress over my poor body." I sat down and wept for very shame, and cried out: "Why had I a liver? Oh, why had I these organs that held me up to the derision of all men?"

My cry brought the Recorder into the room; he looked sad and said: "What has grieved my poor Specimen? Oh, I see what has been passing through your mind, but it is not as you think, you were not examined medically last night. I came in to see if you rested, and finding that you had not taken off your clothing, I removed it while you slept, and placed the coverlet over you. You see," he continued, "now that we have the model we instruct our people from it, not from you."

This man's kind benevolent face, and his reassuring manner, quite restored me to good spirits, and I thanked him for the great interest he took in me. He said:—

"Do not thank me, for although I like you much on your own account, and believe that my liking may grow to love for you, as I would love a son, yet remember that I deserve no thanks for what I have done. It has all come from my desire for information on a subject that has presented no end of doubt to my mind for many years. The information I have gained by meeting with you has placed me under an obligation that I never can repay. Come with me now, the ladies wait our presence."

In the reception room we found the ladies who had provided my simple meal, which I ate and enjoyed. I had a long and very interesting conversation with the Recorder's wife, the daughter joining in occasionally. They told me of many curious adventures that they had had when travelling, many of them arising from their leg weights, or generators getting out of order. In my day, ladies would have dilated on accidents arising from restive or runaway horses, railway collisions, bursting of boilers, or shipwrecks at sea, but now it would appear that it was faulty generators that was the cause of all their ills. This appeared very strange to one, who, like myself, was new to modern life, but after yesterday's experience, when I had my leg weights first coupled, I could say that I quite believe that a restive leg weight would make one nervous, and that a runaway leg weight would simply mean utter destruction. "Only think," I said, "of one of these instruments being determined to go one way, while another determined to go the other. What would it end in?" But the ladies only laughed at these suggested troubles, and told me that everyone was familiar with the construction of these generators, and while they sometimes got them into ridiculous fixes, and caused them great inconvenience, they soon learned to get hold of some object, such as a tree, that enabled them to come to rest; and then by taking the wires off, and re-adjusting them, they easily put all to rights.

The Recorder now came to us, bearing two small satchels in his hands, one he secured to my back, and the other to his own, saying: "This is our baggage, my Specimen. As we will be away a few days we require a change of raiment."

All preparations being now made, my wires were connected. We bade adieu to the ladies, and started off. Knowing, as I now did, what country we were in, I tried to recognise it as we passed along. I had known it well in days of yore, and I found that my recollections had not failed me. The hills and valleys were all the same, and the rivers and streams still ran in the same courses, but otherwise the country was entirely changed. The vegetation was much more luxuriant, the villages and towns, the iron-works, the factories, the railways, and the canals were all gone, and in their places was an endless number of little modest-looking villas, such as the one I had slept in last night, surrounded by gardens laid out with the utmost care. Here you would see a great clump of magnificent forest trees, and yonder, a number of patches of flowering shrubs all arranged with a view to effective landscape decoration. There was a master-hand visible in the whole, but there was no stereotyped regularity. If you could imagine some great being taking up handfuls of landscape, all beautiful in themselves, and casting them broadcast over the country, then you would in a small measure be able to realise what I saw as I passed along.

We met hundreds of people going to and fro in every direction, all on some errand. Sometimes they came singly, and sometimes in batches. Many were singing, many were playing on instruments, and all seemed happy. The Recorder explained to me on the way, while he held me by the arm, that there were three classes of people: first, there was the class to which he belonged, who corresponded with nobles in rank; then, there was the class represented by the sages, the clerks and message operators, possessed of considerable intellect, but not of great learning; then, there were people of the guide class, such as I had met first, whose intellects were far from brilliant, and whose physical strength was very inferior. They were wanting in learning, and were altogether of a lower type, having remained the same for generations, never advancing or falling behind. They took the place of lower gardeners, and were useful in their station of life. Occasionally some of this class showed abilities, and were advanced to a higher grade.

Conversing in this way we did not feel the journey to Edinburgh a long one, in fact it only lasted forty minutes. The Recorder said he would not take me through the ruined city as it was not considered elevating to visit the seats of ancient iniquity. We, however, saw the ruins as we skirted them. There was the old rock on which the castle once stood; there was the Calton Hill, but one looked in vain for a trace of the monuments that once stood there. It was truly not now modern Athens, but an ancient Athens. The whole place was completely in ruins. The sad thoughts that flocked in swarms through my brain made me silent. I remembered well the many pleasant days I had spent in this picturesque city, and I felt inclined to rebel against this new order of things. I had no unpleasant recollections of Edinburgh. All my visits there were of a holiday nature, and I had not noticed much sin or depravity. Then why should all be ruin and desolation now? Did man get so very bad after my day as to deserve this annihilation of his works?

We came to a stand on a hill that I recognised to be Arthur's Seat, and we were about to proceed towards a large, low building on the top, when I begged the Recorder to give me a few explanations of how Edinburgh was ruined, but his answer was simply:—

"I will tell you all about this terrible calamity in good time, but not now, the one story will do for all the cities, they were all ruined at the same time."

"But," I said, "you seem to condemn all the men of my time, and in doing so you appear to me unjust. I have known many good and kind hearted merchants, engineers, lawyers, clergymen, sailors, and soldiers, that would not do a wrong thing if they were aware of it, to save their lives."

He replied:—"My Specimen, you misunderstand me if you think I meant to say all were bad. Did I not tell you that while to a common observer all might appear bad, many good people were left. Had this not been the case we would not now be in existence. I know that all this change, all the desolation of these great cities, the total disappearance of what you considered the great works of your engineers, must to you appear sad, but if you had had the means of following up the events of this world, as I have followed them, and as all of this generation have followed them, by a long life of study, you would not be either astonished or grieved, you would rejoice as we now rejoice that things are so much better than they were in your day. But, my Specimen, if you but think of the temptations that surrounded the people of your time, you will see the tremendous difficulties a good man had to contend with, if he wished to remain good. You have mentioned merchants. When you think that they had to gain a living by watching some opportunity of taking advantage of their fellow merchants' weakness or ignorance, or of stealing a march on them; when you remember that a very shady piece of covert deceit was considered but the action to be expected of a smart business man; when you think of the questionable devices that were resorted to, to run up or beat down prices; when you think of the companies that were floated by making use of false statements, skilfully worded to evade the law, by men holding what in your day were considered honourable positions; when you recollect the hundreds of thousands of poor widows and inexperienced people who were taken in by these devices, I think you will agree with me in saying that it was difficult to get a good man filling such a position. But far be it from me to say that all business men were bad. They must not be judged by our present standard of goodness. No, I would rather say that they should be judged more by a standard that will make allowance for the terrible temptations and necessities with which they were surrounded. Where a good, true and honourable man did exist, he was assuredly deserving of far greater credit for being good and true, than any good man of the present day. We do not now work for our individual gain, we work for the good of the whole community, and not being surrounded by temptation we are not as liable to fall into the same errors. Lawyers in your day were men that had a very trying position to fill. They often had to advocate the cause of men that they believed were guilty, and although knowing that they were advocating a bad cause, they had to try and prove their clients innocent. Thus they used their intellectual power in many cases to prove that an innocent man was guilty. Still, amid all this, I agree with you that there were many good lawyers in your day, but you must admit that a state of society that does not require such men's services is preferable.

" Your engineers and other scientific men you are proud of— I do not hesitate to say that you have considerable and just reason for this pride.

They did much for the advancement of science, and even in our day the inventions they schemed and carried out are looked on with admiration. Considering the age of darkness in which they were invented, and the means at their disposal, their works certainly were deserving of much credit. But there is one thing that they deserve censure for in our eyes, and that is the pains, trouble and stupidities they went into to destroy nature. This was not so confirmed in your day, but about a hundred years later the face of the earth was thoroughly disfigured, the ocean was begrimed with clouds of smoke, steamers were steaming in all directions, and the land was covered with railroads. Factories of all kinds were dotted over the earth, smoke and dirt was everywhere. The consumption of fuel was wasteful to a degree. The coal fields were exhausted, and all the oil bearing strata were pumped dry. Your engineers never thought of the people that were to come after them, they only thought of the present, leaving to providence the future supplies for unborn generations. Such a state of things could never last, nature could not stand it, vegetation would have been banished from the face of the earth. Fortunately the supply of smoke-producing fuel was exhausted; the engineers had to restrict their operations, and the exhaustion of nature's stores of fuel gave her time to regain strength. It appears to us now that these men were stupid to a degree to keep so religiously moving in the same groove, using a power that was detrimental to nature, while nature had provided an enormous supply of power ready to their hand, free from all nature-destroying objections. Of course it is easy for us of the present day to find fault with what was done by the ancients, and you are no doubt correct in saying that I judge harshly. Perhaps the inhabitants of this earth, three thousand years hence, may speak of us in the same strains as we now do of the people that existed three thousand years ago. Such is life, and the progress of science and intelligence, my Specimen. We must all try and do what little we can to improve the existing state of things, always bearing in mind that we owe a debt of gratitude to our fellows of the past for what they have done, and a thought for the requirements of those that will follow us."

With such conversation as this we proceeded slowly towards the building on the top of the hill. I somehow felt a sadness creeping over me. I again began to think of what had become of all the people that inhabited the earth when I was on it. What had become of all those who had been born and died since I had left it? What was it all to come to? Where was it all to end? I got lost in thought; I began to think, and found that this state of doubt and suspense was more than I could bear. My mind could not grasp the situation, and I felt miserable to a degree. I saw the Recorder was watching me, and I could see that he could read my inmost thoughts. I could stand my mental agony no longer, and sitting down on a stone I wept, with bitter feelings of sorrow—sorrow that was so deep and sad and searching that it racked and tore my frame, and seemed as though its force would sever me. I lost all control of myself; I neither knew nor cared where I was. Such was my humiliation and grief that my consciousness left me, and I would have fainted away, had not the Recorder taken me by the hand, and in a kindly loving voice said: "My son, my son, do not give way so."

Whether it was the soothing, compassionate, kindly and almost loving tone of his voice, or whether it was the energy that was flowing into me through his hand that revived and reassured me, I cannot tell, but I soon began to recover my self-possession. The Recorder did not speak again for a long time, but continued holding my hand. At last, when he saw that I was once more calm, he said:—

"I called you my son, because I see that you are in great grief, and because I have a great regard for you. Now I want you to be calm for a little while, while I speak quietly to you. I find that I have over-estimated your strength of mind and understanding; I have not fully realised the magnitude of the change that you are experiencing; I have omitted to realise that your mind cannot grasp the possibility of all that has taken place since your day. This conduct is inexcusable in me. I should have known better, but it is only another illustration of the weakness and inconsiderateness of the finite mind. I hope you will forgive me."

I could not reply. So he continued: "My son, I have been watching the working of your thoughts; I see they are craving for information that in this world can never be given; you are wondering what has become of the men of your day, and those that have been born and have died since then. This, my son, is information that has been denied to the finite by the Infinite. If it is His will that this information should be withheld from us during life, what right have we to inquire into mysteries that He thinks should be withheld? He has told us that we will rise again, and that the just shall be rewarded. If we doubt this we are not worthy of Him, or of the reward that is in store for the just. You must remember what you have seen at the Observatory; you must continue to contemplate His works; you must try and realise the power of a being that is capable of controlling the Universe; and you must examine such questions with all the wisdom you can bring to bear on this mysterious subject, to enable you to realise the greatness of that power. When you think you have brought your mind to conceive this greatness, then ask yourself the question, 'What am I that I should try to penetrate that which He has willed I should not know?' My son, you must have faith and trust in Him, and believe that what He has said will be fulfilled. Our generation has had over three thousand years' more experience and education than yours, yet we know not what will take place, or where our spirits shall reside. Many theories have been propounded. Some say our spirits will migrate to other planets, where they will live on in happiness and everlasting joy; but this mystery is a sealed book that no man can open until the appointed time. So now, my son, be comforted, and be calm; live in trust, in hope, and in faith; improve your mind and study nature, which is the only study worthy of intellectual beings. I had hoped, my Specimen, to take you through the seat of government here to-day, and also the school of art and science, but I find that I have been working you rather hard. We will, therefore, first give you a good refreshing rest to restore your nerves and mind to a proper state of health, and then visit these places."

He now took me up to a door, the same in appearance as the one to which the guides at first took me. He knocked; the door was opened; and we were received by a Sage, much of the same stamp as the other men I have described; he, also, had a message stool. The Recorder went up to him and talked, while the orthodox plate was produced. This man evidently had not got very good manners, as he came up to me and stared at me in amazement, making no secret of his curiosity. I felt quite annoyed, but the Recorder came to me, and taking my arm, led me through a door into another room; here we were met by a fine looking man of the same high order of mankind as the Recorder himself. He gave us a very hearty welcome. I found he was chief Recorder for this district, which was evidently a position of great honour. As I felt fatigued, I was requested to go into an adjoining room, where I found a couch on which I lay down and slept.

PART X.

HOW long I slept I know not, and never asked, having now got to that state of mind that enables one to receive the information that is tendered to him and ask no questions. I felt that when I thought much I got sad and miserable, so I tried to cast my thoughts aside, devote my time to observation, and keep it open to instruction. When I wakened there was no one in the room. I did not feel inclined to rise, so I lay and ruminated about all that had taken place during the last few days. As I lay in this state thinking how silly it was of me to give way as I did yesterday, I made up my mind to show no more weakness of this kind in the future, but to accommodate myself to the circumstances in which I was placed, and try to enjoy things as they existed, instead of worrying about the past, and trying to pry into the future. Thus I argued with my own weakness, and doing so gave me strength of mind; and so I gradually began to get cheerful. At last I said, "Hang it, I will be happy." I threw off the coverlet and jumped out of bed on to the floor, when I began to hop about again like a ball. This elastic life coming so soon after my serious thoughts and sorrows made me feel that hopping about without being able to settle down, was a position of the most ridiculous absurdity. I thought to myself how I would laugh at seeing any one going through this operation. I tried to keep grave, but could not for the life of me do so; I fairly gave way, and burst out in a regular jolly old side-splitting, neck-cracking laugh, in fact a laugh of my own people, that the Recorder termed "the Ancients." The loudness of my laugh was something terrible; I tried hard to modify it; but every time I hopped on the floor, out it would come again and again. In the middle of my performance in rushed the two Recorders, who looked at me in astonishment, holding their ears, but this only made me laugh the more.

"Quiet, quiet, my Specimen," my Recorder roared out to me at the pitch of his voice; "you are excited, you are ill, but do not for any sake continue making such a diabolical noise."

I had now come to rest, and explained that I was not ill, but only laughing at my own absurd position. Both shook their heads, however, saying :—

"You require rest, you are very ill, your nerves are unstrung." So they lifted me on the couch again, and I was passed to sleep.

When I next awoke, I was quite calm and collected. I determined not to move with such rashness again, and got out of bed in a very gingerly way. Inch by inch I moved, in case I should get on the hop again. While doing so, I could not help thinking of the peculiarities of human nature, and the liability of thinking mortals to go from one extreme to another. How often had I seen illustrations of this in my former life. I had seen men of the soberest minds rushing into actions of the greatest absurdity. I had seen men rushing from sanctity of the strictest kind to the most depraved sin. I had noticed engineers who had in the first instance made a structure rather light, going to the other extreme and making the next absurdly heavy ; and here was I, getting out of my couch at a snail's pace to avoid getting on the hop that was only produced by a sudden bound. Could we but hit the happy medium in all our actions, how much better it would have been for the world at large. What religious fanaticism it would have saved, what disappointment and sorrow it would have prevented, what terrible enmities might have been avoided, and what peace and happiness might have been attained. Such, however, was evidently not to be, and therefore has not existed for some good and sound reason not open to our limited intelligence.

The Recorder on seeing me pronounced me to be recovered, and we proceeded on our journey. I need not take you, reader, over all our travels to the various cities, or rather ruins of cities that we passed near, or to the various seats of governments that we went through, as all bore a marked resemblance to those I have already described. Everywhere I went I found the Recorder was received with respect as a leader of the people. I had not the slightest doubt that I was an object of great interest to all the scientists at all the seats of government, and at all the schools, but none of the people annoyed me by impertinent curiosity or questions. There were no enterprising interviewers asking me questions as to my likes for or dislikes to this new state of society. But all the same, I felt confident that at every one of these places I had been the subject of internal and external medical examination. While I was asleep, I felt certain that every Medical School had been provided with a model of me made from life studies. All my poor details had been examined and reproduced, and knowing this, I got so inured to it that I began to think: "Well, why should I trouble myself about trifles? These are a persevering people that will have information if they want it, therefore there is no use in me objecting. I am now resigned to my fate, so let them have their way. They want instruction in the past formation of man, and they do me no harm in gratifying their desire for information."

During my travels, I was presented to the king. He was a very old and wise-looking man, both kindly and fascinating in manner. I saw him in the midst of his advisers, as they were called, but I believe that in reality they were his directors. Like good, wise Queen Victoria of my era, he did what he was directed to do by the leading men of his country, in fact, he was the centre around which society and the various governments of his Empire revolved.

I saw the palace of the king, which was of modest dimensions as compared with the palaces of my time, yet withal, it had a kingly appearance; there was an indescribable something about the palace that was not to be found in any of the other buildings that I had seen. Whether it was the presence of more wise-looking men and women or the number of servants, I know not, but something there was that caused this distinction, and it was marked.

I said to the Recorder:—"From what I had seen, the people of his day had as great a veneration for royalty as we had in our day." He replied:—"Most certainly that is the case, my son. No country, no nation, no people can exist without a head; and if a country, a nation, or a people must have a head, it is necessary that the head that they have elected be venerated and respected by the people, if they have any respect for themselves, and if they do not respect themselves they are not worthy of the name of a people, a nation, or even of a community."

I then said:—"I fear that it will be difficult for you to get a king or queen of such intellectual ability as to command respect from such a wise generation as you are."

He replied:—"This is not so much an object with us as you imagine. In fact, it is not desirable for any nation that is really governed by the people to have a king or a queen that is in intellect higher than any of his or her advisers. If we had a king possessed of an overpowering intellect, that intellect would have some particular bent or inclination, that it might try and force on the people against their will. And again, this intellect, though very great, being, after all, but finite, might err in its judgment and do a grievous injury to the nation. No, we do not desire to have our greatest intellects elected as kings or queens, such would not be desirable. What we aim at is to train the minds of our royal family from the very earliest hours of their life to justice, and to take a wise and expansive view of all parties in the state and of all national subjects. We train them up rather to act as judges with judgment, than as actors in the scenes around them. We want them to fulfil the same functions as the fixed spindle on which a wheel revolves, that retains all in position while in motion, and is yet neutral to all that passes around it. And so with our rulers, we wish them to act towards all with the same even-handed justice and restraint, and to allow the arguments of each spoke in the political, social and intellectual world, to have unprejudiced influence on them, while guarding against being carried away by partiality to any. This is what we aim at, and in this we generally succeed."

It was great pleasure to me to draw the Recorder into conversation of this kind; his ideas were so simply and clearly put, that the merest child could understand his meanings. There was one building that interested me greatly,—the Prison of Treasure, situated not far from the ruins of London. It was only one storey in height, like all other modern buildings, but it was of immense extent. The walls were thick and massive, built of granite in huge blocks, and I should say that they must have been at least thirty feet high. We entered by a large door constructed of silver, on each panel of which were depicted men and women in various stages of misery and sin, some fighting with one another, some murdering one another, some in chains, some in wild carousals of drunkenness, some receiving the last sentence from a judge, and some being hanged or beheaded. The entire door was one ghastly record of past misery and sin. On entering the interior hall there was a swarm of horrible models, in wax, of misers, of avaricious men, of surface saints, that prayed for glory in heaven while they grasped with the grasp of desperation the money bags, that to them, in their secret hearts, were of more value than salvation. Then, there were wonderfully beautiful representations executed in the same wax like material, of scenes of robbery and murder for the purpose of acquiring wealth. There were models of the city schemer that was supposed by the world to be a saint; there he was—scheming out plans to defraud his fellows. The next model to this represented the same man after the successful carrying out of his nefarious enterprise. There was a sanctimonious grin of satisfaction on his face;

he rubbed his hands with delight as he contemplated a huge pile of gold. In the distance was a transparent picture depicting the people this man had ruined. A grave-looking man was there with his wife and children starving in a miserable garret, and a poor widow with a weakly child at her breast, trying to support young life with the last drop of her own life's strength. There was the strong man struggling for life and battling for existence against the infamy of the unjust, and there was the weakly man, the woman and the child, crushed down and trampled to death by the weight of their miseries.

The next scene was this same schemer's last days. He had amassed great wealth during his miserable life—he had done so by grinding the poor to the very death. He had no soft place in that heart of stone, and now that hard conscience of his, when brought to face eternity, had no soft spot within that could give mercy to its own badness. Truly it is said that once awakened to its own badness, man's conscience is its most severe judge on earth. Here was this man represented as on the rack of his own creation, still he was holding on to the filthy lucre that had been the ruin and damnation of his soul. He was conscious of his sin, but it had such a hold of him that he could neither forgive himself nor repent.

These scenes, representing various stages of avarice, were executed with such wonderful truth and force that my eyes could read all, as if the terrible story had been enacted in life itself before me.

We now entered a huge hall, over the door of which were inscribed the words, "Beauty in Treasure." The Recorder explained to me that this was a hall in which many of the gems of the nation had been arranged with a view to show that, apart from their ancient intrinsic value and deplorable history, they possessed of themselves wonderful beauty and interest. On entering, I was fully convinced of the truth of his remark. The walls of the building appeared to be constructed of silver and gold, and the panels were simply filled with diamonds, rubies and other precious stones. It was not so much the beauty of these stones themselves as the arrangement of the colours, and the harmony of the designs, that struck me; the effect was grand. The light came as usual from the ceiling, but by a sort of self-acting sliding screen that kept continually moving over it, while the light was as continually shifting and changing, and the effect was one of great beauty. At one moment you saw a gleam of light coming from pure diamonds, while anon this bright, pure light would change into a pink, a blue, or a green, and all the colours would for the moment blend, then disentangle, working out into separate rays, asserting, as it were, their own individuality. A little further on they were in fond embrace, co-mingling beauty with beauty, and effect with effect, when anon as if by one consent they fall out; they become agitated, and quarrelling, separate. So the game continued, beauty contending with beauty so long as the screen shifted.

This room reminded me strongly of real life in my day, as seen by an innocent and pure-minded man, the gems representing the good people of the earth, while the varied effects produced on them by the ever varying lights reminded me of the great joys and sorrows, the sunshine and the shadows that passed over us in those days, days that to me now began to look strange and dim. The Recorder's voice broke in on my reverie, saying:—

"My son, your thoughts are far, far away, and now that I have shown you the uncorrupted beauty of the precious metals and the precious stones of the ancients, I would like also to show you the record of some few of the crimes committed by man to satisfy their abominable craze for their possession. It was not that they loved them for their beauty; no, their love for them consisted in a selfish desire that they might possess something that they could flaunt in the eyes of their fellows, and look at them with an eye that said, 'I possess that which you would like to have but cannot get.' Women adorned themselves with them, not because of the beauty of the gems, but because they knew and prided themselves in the consciousness that they were raising the abominable feeling of envy in the bosoms of other women, who were perhaps purer in mind and in body than themselves."

We now entered another large room, over the door of which were the words "Beauty defiled by man." Here we saw numerous gems of various sizes placed on small obelisks about three feet high. The Recorder took me up to one of these, and asked me to read a Latin inscription that was written on the sides of the obelisk. It explained the gem's history, and stated that 1,600 men had been murdered for its sake, 2,463 had been maimed, thousands had been imprisoned, flogged and starved. It had engendered envy, hatred, and malice in the bosoms of untold millions; the lies told about it and for its possession were innumerable, and some had even denied and blasphemed God for its sake.

In reading over this terrible record of the crimes and miseries caused by the love of mortals for a senseless though beautiful stone, I felt the appropriateness of the institution in which we now were, and the wisdom of the people who had instituted it. Surely if these gems when set loose on earth caused such iniquity, the proper place for them was a prison where no individual could possess them. While they were open to all as a whole, they were available individually to none, and therefore they might do good, but could do no harm.

We examined hundreds of such specimens of beauty, each possessed of a sad history of crimes recorded on their pedestals. Gems that had adorned the profligate and the pure minded, the noble and the ignoble, the murderer and the murdered, the guilty and the innocent, there they were now confined in a prison. I said again, better far, that this should be as it is now, than be again as it was in my days.

PART XI.

AMONG the many things that surprised me during my travels with the Recorder, one of the most remarkable was the absence of any disorder among the people. I noticed no officials that could be said to fill the place of our police or military. All seemed to be happy and contented with their lot, although there were several distinct grades of society. I thought much on this subject, as I could not understand how this great nation, consisting of nearly half the population of the globe, managed to carry on its business at home and defend its interests abroad without police or military. One day, when we were journeying homeward, I asked the Recorder if society had reached such a state of perfection that guardians of the peace at home and abroad could be dispensed with? His reply was that he regretted that such, unfortunately, was not the case, and continuing, he said, "Nor do I see the possibility of perfect harmony existing for long among large communities of finite beings. From the beginning it has been found necessary to control and govern the actions of the multitude by some power greater and better organized than the multitude that is to be governed."

"Wars alas! we cannot hope always to avoid. Ambitious men and ambitious nations will exist to the end of time. But as the world grew older the mode of carrying on war has been altered. It would take a long time to describe all the changes that have taken place, so I will not attempt to enter on the subject at present, but I will tell you something of the method that is now adopted, as it is well that you should understand what is going on around you.

"I have often mentioned to you before that nowadays intelligence is all powerful and omnipotent.

"Our mode of controlling the people of our own nation is by authority given by the state to the ruling elder of each community. He is appointed to this post and entrusted with this duty because it is presumed that he has greater intellectual power than any one else in his district.

"With us men possessed of the greatest intellect have also the greatest physical power, or to put it more plainly, the greater a man's intellectual power the greater is his power to utilize these mysterious forces by which we are surrounded. A ruling elder, therefore, has not only himself to depend on in case of need, but he has also at his disposal an endless supply of force if he is intellectually strong enough to utilize it, and consequently has always at command the means of subduing any tumult. He can, also, if necessary, call to his assistance the intellectual power of other members of this community.

"In the event of serious and widespread disturbances, which happily are now almost unknown, the elders and higher intellects of the various districts unite and by their combined intellectual power crush the malcontents.

"In internal questions and petty home disturbances, this is a very easy thing to accomplish, as invariably all the great intellects are banded together on the side of law and order, and the ruling elders have but rarely to oppose other minds of equal calibre.

"But if two great nations of this era should ever so far forget themselves as to war with one another such a war would be ten thousand times more terrible than any that has ever taken place on this earth.

"Up to the present time since the re-union of all English speaking nations, we have, thank God, been able to settle our disputes by conferences, but as we are told that to the end of time there will be 'wars and rumours of wars,' we must keep the possibility of such a sad eventuality in view, and be prepared for it when it comes.

"My son, I have often tried to picture to myself such a conflict. Only think of the awful results! Only try and realise the consequence of hundreds of thousands of great minds having at command such powerful and mysterious forces meeting in battle with equal numbers of another nationality, endowed with the same intellectual power and having the same mysterious forces at their command!

"Such a state of things is too awful to contemplate. Yet we must be and are prepared.

"While we make no military display, we have among us those who make a study of war. We know that much will depend on strategy, generalship, and discipline; and so we have our generals, our officers, and petty officers all prepared.

"It is our constant and sincere prayer that such terrible events should never take place. Oh yes! My son, we have need to pray that we may never be afflicted with a scourge of this kind. It would mean the destruction of a large number of our greatest intellects, as all our greatest minds must of necessity be the first to meet the enemy. This destruction of intellectual power would be a terrible blow to the contending nations and to the entire world, a blow that it would take ages to recover from.

"In your day you sent your uneducated citizens under a few intellectual commanders to prosecute your wars. Now things have changed and intellect must come to the front to meet and cope with intellect.

"Now, my son, having given this short sketch, as I am in duty bound, we will leave this unpleasant subject with the hope and prayer that the day is far, far, distant when man will be obliged to face this terrible conflict.

"One thing I am sure of is that the English nation will do all it can to avoid war, and should war be forced upon us we will not shirk our responsibility, but do our duty and preserve untarnished that name for bravery, justice, perseverance, and independence, which our forefathers won and maintained through all generations even down to the present."

During my travels, I was also shown those wonderful aerial and naval fleets that the Recorder had mentioned. I must say I was much disappointed at the size of the aerial vessels which I saw first, as compared with my recollections of the great armour-clad and other war vessels of the past, and of the enormous merchant vessels, steered and propelled by steam, some of them ten and twelve thousand tons burthen, with their great engines and boilers, great holds for cargo, with enormous cabins, and with every accommodation for cooking and sanitary purposes. These aerial vessels were mere pigmies in comparison with our steamers. Before I describe their construction, I must try and explain to you the means by which they were propelled, as explained to me by the Recorder, and as I am neither an engineer nor a scientist, you must, my dear reader, excuse anything that may not be quite scientific or quite in keeping with mechanics. Put all this want of explicitness and correctness down to my shortcomings in describing these wonderful triumphs of human invention. Or failing this latitude to me, you must attribute your non-comprehension to the imperfect faculties you yourself possess for understanding such things. Those of you who are scientific, and trustful by nature, will have no difficulty in allowing for, and correcting my mistakes; but minds given to doubt will continue to doubt, and will be in doubt to the end of time, because doubt will not allow them to understand. As well as I can remember, the Recorder said :—

"My son, I promised to describe to you the means by which we propel and control our aerial and naval fleets, and I think I mentioned something to you about lines of force. As I know you are not a mechanic, and as I know your scientific education is not even advanced for the age in which you lived, I have prepared some balls to represent our planet and our atmosphere at various distances from the earth's surface, and these I trust will assist you to comprehend my explanations. There was a philosopher in your day, or slightly prior to it, named Newton, who is reputed by history to have discovered the law of gravity. This man got much more credit for this alleged discovery than he deserved. The fact being that (as the story goes) he saw an apple fall, and called the force that caused it to fall, gravity, but this law was known from the beginning of time. There was not a living man, in any age, who was not conscious that if he stumbled, he would fall to the earth. There was not a monkey or a climbing beast of the old animal life that did not know that if he failed to retain his footing or his hold, he would fall to the earth beneath him. The birds of the air knew that if they ceased to keep their wings in motion they would fall. So, it is evident that this fact which we call the earth's attraction for bodies was known although not named before Newton was thought of. Still, he was undoubtedly a great man, and reduced this force to a measurable quantity for the use of science. Well, this attraction of the earth is one of the great powers that we use. To explain this, I take this globe, and I take this piece of elastic, I attach one end of the elastic to the globe, and another to this little model vessel. You see that I can pull this little vessel away to the extent of the elastic limit of the elastic, but when I suddenly release my hold, the little model flies towards the globe with considerable force.

"Now, you must clearly understand that this illustration is not a correct one, and is simply given to you to fix your ideas as to the principle or law of the earth's attraction. Remember that the model should (if uninfluenced by the elastic), like what you called a balloon, float in the atmosphere, and that in falling towards the globe the power of the elastic should increase instead of becoming exhausted.

"Well, here I have four globes of different sizes: one is supposed to represent the earth at its surface, that is at the tops of its highest mountains, which are only, when compared with the globe itself, but slight roughnesses like those on an orange. You will notice that this globe is wound round with red silk threads from north to south diagonally. These represent the north and south lines of force. Then you will see another set of blue silk threads that represent the east and west lines of force, also slightly diagonal. The north and south lines of force are produced, we believe, by what you call magnetism, and the east and west lines of force by some power that is generated by the earth's rotation,—some say it is electricity. Now, the second globe is taken to represent two thousand feet above the earth's surface, and you will notice that the lines of force instead of being nearly at right angles to one another, are at an angle slightly more acute. Then if we take the third and fourth balls, you will see that the greater distance we get from the earth's surface the more acute these lines of force get to one another.

"We have three great powers at our disposal for aerial navigation; first, we have the earth's attraction, which you will see, if it could be destroyed or modified, would allow us to ascend; then, we have what we call the red and blue lines of force. If we destroy or partially destroy the earth's attraction, we will ascend as I told you from the earth, and in doing so the earth will travel westward from us at a greater or less speed in proportion to the distance we are from its surface, and if we again bring the earth's attraction into play, we will descend on the earth and travel with it. But this alone would be a very useless advantage, as we could only make easting, and it is here that the north and south, east and west lines of force come into play. The earth's attraction is destroyed or modified at will by a great instrument carried in the bottom of each vessel, and the lines of forces are utilized at will by other instruments, which act as steering and pulling engines. You see that by allowing the vessel to ascend and descend, bringing the red or blue lines of forces into play, any position of the earth's surface can be reached, the direction north and south being controlled by the lines of force at different altitudes."

I here ventured to ask how it was possible for them to steer their vessels without any land marks.

He replied;—"While we have had no land marks we have the heavenly bodies to guide us in the same way as your ships used to be steered by the observations of the sun's position at mid-day, and the stars by night. Besides this we have a very beautiful apparatus that was indeed foreshadowed in your day by the gyroscopic compass. This apparatus consists of a geographical globe, that after the principle of a gyroscope is set in motion, and is so arranged that it keeps in motion at a uniform speed for three months; this globe is provided with a pointer that points to a position on its surface corresponding to the position that the vessel is in, in relation to the earth, so that at all times we can tell within a mile or two the exact position in which we are. The steersman has simply to look at his globe, and by working handles, one controlling the earth's attraction, and the other two controlling the action of the lines of force see that his pointer is following the course laid down on the globe before him.

"There are many other refinements that I will not trouble you with as you are not a scientific man, such as resistance coils that prevent the vessels when descending from coming suddenly into contact with the earth's surface, and attraction coils that prevent the vessels ascending above a certain altitude. These are practically self-acting governors which come into action in the event of any accident to the other instruments or carelessness on the part of the steersman.

"The naval fleets are not the same as these; they depend, except for anchoring, entirely on the power of the red and blue lines of force, and as they have the great buoyancy of the water to assist them in carrying greater weights, they are provided with propelling engines that utilize these forces mechanically; the speeds they attain you would consider very great,—they have reached one hundred miles an hour,—but compared with the speed of the aerial vessels their speed is as nothing. The naval fleets are steered by a modification of the same compass as is used by the aerial fleet, and they have the advantage of being able to make direct southing, northing, easting, or westing, as by the use of a helm they can be steered in any direction."

After this lecture on the nature of the power, and the way in which it was utilized, I was taken through an aerial vessel. She was in shape a long flat oval; I should say 100 feet long by 30 wide, and about 10 feet deep, and was entered by a door in her tortoise-shaped back. The vessel appeared to me to be constructed of a material like aluminium, and its shell was apparently very thin. The cabins, for the size of the vessel, were very roomy, being lighted, as there were no windows or ports, by globes of luminous material. These were fixed in such a way that one-half projected through the vessel's skin, while the other projected into the cabin. The outer half was thus being charged with light, while the inner half was giving off light to the interior. The deck was protected by a railing constructed of thin plates, stiffened at the edge by a metallic beading. The cabin furniture consisted of light seats and couches, securely fixed to the floor by means of screws.

In the centre of the vessel I saw all the interesting apparatus that had been described to me by the Recorder. He took me up to these instruments and explained all about the different functions of the different parts, but as I had not a mind capable of understanding such highly scientific subjects, I begged him to desist, saying that while I was able to grasp the general description of the principles and laws that were utilized by these wonderful contrivances, it would only make me confused, if he tried to drum the details into me.

He said:—"My son, my enthusiasm for such things leads me to forget that you are as yet young in learning. I would have you study these subjects, as in our day mechanical science has been placed above all others. It has, as it were, become chemically combined with all sciences; no science can move without it. In your day, the mechanical engineer had to make money by his profession, and therefore a beautiful science was defiled by a desire for gain. Now, we study mechanics, because we love the science itself, and not its financial results."

Having inspected the aerial ship, in which I was greatly interested, the Recorder now said he would next take me to the docks in order to allow me to inspect the naval vessels. I was all expectation to know what the docks of the present day were like. "Here at least," I said to myself, "there will be some resemblance to what I had known in my previous life." During our journey to the docks, I taxed my imagination, and tried to compare things as I had known them with the things I now expected to see. I said to myself :—"These docks won't be clean—I never saw a dock that was clean. There is sure to be a strong smell of pitch and tar—there always is in docks. There will be ropes, planks and chains to tumble over—such things are always about docks. There will be lots of bales of goods under sheds, and sailors and lumpers hanging about. They may have reformed the land and the landsmen, but Jack would retain many of his characteristics; salt water made these men what they were in my day, and salt water would retain its hold on them to the last." I got to be quite confident in this belief. I actually grew so certain of it that I chuckled to myself and rubbed my hands together in delight, thinking that now I would have a chance of having a "rise" out of the Recorder. Now I would be able to say to him:—"My good friend, in naval matters at least you are to a very large extent indebted to the intelligence of the despised ancients." I noticed that the Recorder also looked very happy, and I felt that this must be due to his knowledge of what was passing through my mind. I was confident that he, being a very benevolent man, was happy, because I was at last to see something that nearly resembled what I had known, as ships, docks, sailors and lumpers, and all the other things in connection with docks that existed in my previous life.

But alas! my visions and my dreams were to be dashed aside. The Recorder's pleasant, happy face was, I found, not due to the cause I supposed. He was simply reading my thoughts, and smiling at their folly.

After we had been travelling for about half an hour, he said to me, pointing to the southward :—"There are the docks I am taking you to see. There are some of the vessels of our naval fleet. Don't you see them?"

I answered: "I see neither ships nor docks. Your vision, you must remember, is much stronger than mine. I certainly see a large sheet of water, like a big ornamental sea full of islands, but where are the docks, the ships, the tar, the pitch, the sheds, the goods, the sailors, the lumpers, the planks, the dirty water, yes, and the nasty smells?"

"My son," he replied, "These things that you have named are all gone—they are all things of the past. You ancients could not do anything without smoke and dirt, pitch and tar. You made your docks very cesspools for all the dirt and filth of your cities. You caged your sailors in dirty dens on board your vessels. So cramped and ill-ventilated were the quarters you caused them to occupy, that you demoralized them in mind and in body. They were slovenly in their clothing, depraved in their minds, immoral and intemperate in their habits when ashore, yet withal, a good natured, innocent set of men when at sea, and free from the temptations landsmen laid as snares for them. Yes," he said, "it is well that these are things of the past." We now drew nearer to the sheet of water, and I saw that what I thought were islands were floating bodies like immense mastless ships. Having first seen the aerial vessels, which were very small, I was greatly surprised now to see vessels of such great magnitude. They did not stand high out of the water, but the length was very great, and the beam was about one-third of the length. There were in all six of these island-like vessels. They seemed to keep quite stationary and yet I could see no chains, cables or anchors holding them. The Recorder seeing my wonder explained that they were held in position by what are known as earth attractors placed in the vessels' bottoms. "In very small ships," he said, "there is one, but in vessels of the size we now see there are five such instruments. A very powerful attractor is placed right in the centre, and holds the vessel to the earth, by what I might by way of illustration describe as innumerable invisible cords or lines of attraction. When held by the central attractor the vessel may be swung round, but when the other four (two of which are placed near the bow and two near the stern) are brought into action, the vessel remains perfectly stationary. So powerful are those invisible cables, that no hurricane can shift her when once she is thus moored. The seas may wash over her decks, but can do her no harm, as in such weather all openings are securely covered in. How absurd it appears to us now to read of your chains and your cables, your anchors and other contrivances that were of no use until you got into shallow water that must of necessity be near the rocks, the great source of the danger you wished to avoid. In fact, your would-be wise naval architects designed vessels that had to seek shallow and therefore dangerous waters to enable them to use the miserable contrivances to which they had to trust for a chance of safety; whereas, we come to anchor anywhere in any depth of water in an instant. But we must not wait here longer. Let us go on board." He led me down to a landing stage where lay a number of little boats, such as I previously described as having seen spinning about the lakes. He got into one of these directing me to follow. I did so, sitting down in the bow, while he was seated in the stern. He took up two small knobs at the ends of lines like tiller lines, one in each hand, and the little craft immediately seemed literally to bound forward. I had at first to hold on to the seat to prevent my body jumping right back into the Recorder's face, but I soon got accustomed to the rapid motion, and was able to retain my seat, and see everything around me. Looking towards the shore, I saw nothing resembling my dear old dirty docks. No, there was nothing but trees and flowers, with here and there picturesque little landing stages and small villas. The Recorder guided our little craft round the various vessels to allow me to get an idea of their external appearance. I should say each vessel was nine hundred feet in length. They had a very high freeboard, not less than ten feet: the railing, which took the place of bulwarks, was quite open and light in construction, standing about three feet high.

The Recorder told me in passing that these great vessels were built wholly of aluminium bronze, which, he stated, resisted the effects of the atmosphere and was very strong. In going round the harbour we met many parties that the Recorder told me were composed of seamen. Such oddities. They were the same type of being as my guides, only browned by the sun and exposure, and instead of being dressed in white, their little figures were clad in garments of the same cut but blue. While I was now getting familiar with these strange people, I felt shocked to hear such creatures as these called seamen, and I could not help thinking that civilization had reduced my ideal seaman to a creature that one could not but think a miserable substitute at best. We ran alongside one of the vessels, and ascending a little gangway were met at the top by the commander. Here, again, was a great change for me. I had pictured to myself a man in blue, gold, and epaulettes, as commander of this great vessel; but alas! this sea king now before me was dressed just like the Recorder, had the same class of features, and was of about the same stature. He turned out to be a relative of the Recorder, and expressed great joy at meeting him so unexpectedly. While greeting him his eyes were never off me, he was evidently at a loss to know who and what I was. Seeing this the Recorder led him aside, no doubt to explain my nationality and history. He came back and politely showed me over his great vessel from stem to stern, taking the greatest pains to explain all its wonders. I shall not attempt to give you a description of the mechanism I saw and had explained to me on board this vessel. It is enough to say that it bore a strong resemblance to that which I had seen in the aerial vessel, only it was of a much greater size. The Recorder had previously told me that in the naval fleets the power of the lines of force was not utilised direct, but through mechanism which enabled the commander to take his vessel in any direction he desired.

I was shewn force converting and propelling machinery, attractors, propellers, controllers and any number of other contrivances, no doubt necessary and useful, but to me incomprehensible. At each instrument or machine was seated an attendant, who received his instructions through a dial which stood before him. The navigating instrument seemed to be very perfect, while not very complex. It was exactly the same as that in the aerial vessel, only the globe was very much larger. The pointer was pointing to the part of England at which the docks were situated. How very simple this beautiful instrument made the science of navigation. I asked the commander if it could always be relied on, he told me that it was very accurate, but when at sea, he said that all commanders made it a rule to check and adjust it by the sun and stars.

In going through the vessel the commander explained that she was almost entirely used for passenger service. There were numerous little state rooms, and the same leading feature that I had seen in connection with everything in this strange country was here. This feature was that everything in some measure is devoted to instruction.

Here, on board this ship I found three great rooms or cabins, fitted up as lecture halls. The first we entered was the "Hall of Practical Navigation;" the second was the "Hall of Forces of Marine Propulsion;" this, I was given to understand, included all kinds of apparatus for propelling, retarding or anchoring vessels; the third was the "Hall for the Investigation of Marine Animal, Insect and Vegetable life."

How different was all this from my time! The inscriptions over the door would probably then have been:—"The Great Food Devouring Cabin;" "The Intoxicating Drinks Cabin;" and "The Smoking and Gambling Cabin." The Recorder remarked that some day we should take a long voyage in one of these vessels, which would be both interesting and instructive. I was shewn a large circular lens in the floor of the "Marine Life Investigation Hall." This was illuminated from above, and the light was so powerful that when you looked down through eyeholes you could examine the waters to a great depth. There was also an arrangement of reflectors that cast pictures of what was going on below, on a large screen, thus allowing all in the hall to see at one time what was passing underneath the vessel. The staff of every vessel included lecturers on each of the three subjects, all of whom were selected from the most educated of the highest order. Astronomy, I was told, could be much better taught at the observatories, but in the "Hall of Practical Navigation," this science was largely made use of.

By the time we got on deck, we found that hundreds of passengers had arrived, and we learned that the packet would sail or rather be drawn away in about an hour. The Recorder soon said good-bye to his relative, and we got into our little boat and made for the shore. I told him that since I had seen this triumph of naval architecture and engineering skill, I felt a great desire to go a voyage.

He replied: "Good, my son, as I told you before, we will enjoy this pleasure together some day soon. If I can but spare the time we will visit America and the other distant parts of our country. You will find all in about the same state of advancement there, as here. Intercommunication has done wonders in levelling national prejudices and local peculiarities."

PART XII.

HAVING now visited all the places the Recorder had promised to show me, and having seen hundreds of other wonders that it would take volumes to describe, we got back again to our starting place. I had by this time advanced so far in modern civilization that I could do without food, and I could move about with the Recorder without his assistance. I had, in fact, learned to control my movements and my leg weights by the power of will, and this progress greatly pleased my friend and my monitor.

When we got back to his house we were met by his wife and daughter, and I somehow thought that the daughter received me with special favour. When seeing all these mechanical and naval wonders I could not help thinking where all this constructive work had been executed. Throughout all our travels, I had not seen a single factory or shipyard anywhere. I asked the Recorder where these great mechanical wonders and these great fleets were made. He said:—"My son, in your day you established your factories where fuel was cheapest and most plentiful. We carry out exactly the same plan. As I told you, we do work by the concentrated heat of the sun. So we establish all factories that use heat where the sun's heat is strongest, that is in what your geographers called the tropics. It is there all this work is carried out, as you shall see when we go on our travels."

After a short stay with his family, extending in all to but a few hours, the Recorder said he could not remain longer, as he must get back to his office, having been now many days absent. I was now for the first time left alone with the ladies. They were most kind and attentive to me. I was taken out for long walks, or rather flights; and we visited a number of their lady friends. In many of these visits, I was made aware of the fact that even the ladies of the most refined modern type of this generation were brimful of curiosity, as many that we visited, when there was no man present, came and gazed at me in a very rude way, in fact on two occasions they actually pinched me, I suppose to see if I was man or mummy. After this my modesty caused me to decline visiting, except the Recorder was with us; but through all these pleasant little outings the Recorder's daughter never said or did anything rude, and I noticed when curiously-minded ladies took these liberties with me, she looked very much displeased with them for their want of courtesy.

In several of our flights I took her by the hand: what a nice hand it was; and then there was that continued flow of force passing through our fingers. At one time, it appeared to flow from my fingers into hers, and then, it would flow back again. I lost all recollection of her deformity; I thought no longer of her large head and chest; and I now became thoroughly convinced that there was only one true model for Venus, and that model was the Recorder's daughter. She conversed with me on all subjects with the greatest freedom; but when I asked her to explain the history of the ruined cities, she placed her fingers on her lips, and shook her lovely head, saying :—

"No, no, that is father's duty, he will explain all in good time."

This friendly intercourse lasted I am sure for several weeks; but to be candid, I was so happy in this lady's company that I lost all count of time, so I will not be answerable for its duration; it may have been months. I was treated like the most loveable of lovely ladies' pets; the interest that they took in me was something past conception. I must say, for my part, that I was becoming thoroughly spoiled. One day, I asked the ladies :—"Was anyone ever punished in this refined age, and what punishment was resorted to?"

The elderly lady told me that trivial offences were punished by admonitions from the elders of the people, but no matter how great the offence, no one's life was taken. "But for all that," said she, "there is one offence that cannot be named by any woman that is subject to a dreadful punishment."

I asked her to let me know what this punishment was, and with a serious face she said :—"Men or women that are guilty of this terrible crime are allowed to float away alone into endless space ; what becomes of them there we know not. Some say they journey with the dead, and remain in life until the resurrection, but as to what really becomes of them we are ignorant, and must remain so until the appointed day."

I enquired how this terrible execution was carried out. "Oh," she said, "the offender is brought before the Court of Judges, and pleads his own cause. If he is found guilty the men of the district are called together, and on the day fixed for the despatch he is brought before the multitude, his leg weights are removed and replaced by a gravity destroyer, fixed in a belt around his waist, and at a given word he floats upwards, the earth moves away past him and he is seen no more. Terrible! terrible!" she said, and wept.

The description that I had just heard of this most terrible punishment, took a great hold of my mind. I wished to ask what the crime was that was so cruelly dealt with; but I dared not enquire, all looked so grave at the very mention of the punishment. It was truly an intellectual refinement of cruelty. Only think of a living being floating away into an interminable space, and that being one who could live without food,—a being that had a mind, that could think, and hope, and fear. Where would his misery end? When would this poor creature's torment cease? Would birds of prey follow him, flying round his head, gloating over him and pecking at his eyes? But it was useless for me to try to think it all out, to realise the terrors he must endure, and the end he must come to. As the Recorder's wife said:—"Who can tell what becomes of them? This cannot be known, until the day arrives that will clear up all mystery, and put an end to all doubt, and, let us hope, sorrow." I soon got over my feeling of commiseration for these poor criminals, and drowned my thoughts with the delightful intellectual surroundings in which fortune had placed me, growing as I was daily more and more accustomed to my new life in this strange country.

The Recorder was very much occupied for many days with state business, so we did not see much of him. At last, when he had got through his work that had fallen far behind, he came to me one evening and said:—

"My son, I must try and give you the continuation of the history of the English race, down to the present, as I think you are now in a state of health, both in mind and body, that will enable you to understand what I have to reveal, and bear up against the relation of the harrowing details of the destruction of the cities and their inhabitants, with whom you must naturally sympathise. But I will be brief. I have told you how a universal language was founded and established in all countries. I have told you of the great sect that was formed, and of the principles this sect adhered to and propagated. I have told you of the good this sect did in the country districts, and how the educated classes in the cities joined them. I have told you how a certain set of people in the cities opposed them for selfish motives, and I have told you how they influenced the uneducated people, and succeeded in leading them astray. The consequence was that the educated citizens, rather than give up the principles that they had adopted, left the cities and went to reside in the country, thus allowing those who remained full scope to carry out their foolish ways. The cities throughout the empire again became more and more depraved; their inhabitants seemed to again sink to the lowest depths of degradation; they went to the greatest excesses in eating and drinking; and their physical strength became lower and lower by this abuse. Anarchy again rose, and wise men saw that there were terrible times again in store for these people. The great sect of reformers remained steadfast to their principles, inducing as many as they could from the cities to join them in the country; and by the solidity, compactness, and power of their institutions, they managed to keep those that still adhered to the old and foolish way of living in check. The American people were in exactly the same position as the English. The inhabitants of the cities all over the world became degraded, while those who joined the great sect and lived in the country became more and more elevated. The consumption of food was reduced to a minimum by believers in the sect's doctrine. Lung power proportionately increased in them, and it was found that their intelligence increased also. It was a remarkable fact that these reformers seemed to gain ground equally all over the world; they grew in power and influence by living with nature; but all their power and all their influence was unable to reform the cities. Love of money, of gambling, and of excess, went on growing apace, until the cities again became regular dens of vice and corruption.

"Things had got to such a pitch in the year 4200 that there were two distinct factions in every country—the free eaters and those that advocated extreme moderation. The latter being the stronger and more intelligent held well together, and being a world wide organisation had the great advantage on their side of united action.

"About this time great consternation was caused by an announcement made by a philosopher named Baria, who said that he had discovered a new comet which he predicted would either destroy or entirely alter the earth. Most of the learned men, after examining the comet, gave credence to his statement, and all the astronomers confirmed the comet's existence. It came gradually nearer and nearer to our earth, but the city people and non-believers in the great sect's doctrines, only laughed. They said hundreds of comets had come before, and had gone as they had come, without doing any harm. But Baria proved that in pre-historic days a great comet must have visited our planet and altered its physical and climatic conditions, and he said further that this comet would do the same, or it might even destroy the world.

"The great sect to a man, believed in Baria's statements. They visited the cities, and preached reformation to the people while it was yet time, but to no good. They were only laughed at, and scoffed, and in many cases the mobs stoned them, saying: 'This is another of your mad notions; you want to get possession of our cities as you have of our country for your own selfish ends.'

"Baria's prophecies were, alas! but too true. The comet came nearer and nearer to the earth, and with it the awful day of tribulation approached. It came so near that its attraction seemed gradually to slow down the earth's rotation. This was first noticed when it was reported that all the chronometers were going fast. It was found that while they registered twenty-four hours, the sun did not reach the meridian for twenty-five hours. This difference gradually increased, until at the end of a month, it took thirty hours by the chronometer for the earth to make its diurnal revolution, and at last the period was increased to forty-eight hours. Baria and many other philosophers stated that the earth's velocity was being retarded by the attraction of the comet; there was evidently a terrible struggle for the mastery going on between it and the earth. It was a case of the mighty wrestling with the mighty; two giants as it were on the grip for life or death.

"The consternation was terrible. The atmosphere of the earth began to change, and a great plague fell upon the people of the cities, they could not breathe freely. They gradually died by thousands, and to make matters worse, earthquakes took place all over the world, and the surface of the earth cracked. Thousands of cities were levelled to the ground in one day—the people in them who had not died of what they called the plague were crushed beneath the ruins. A great flow of icebergs came floating down the North Atlantic; thousands of ships and steamers were lost, captains found that they were out of their reckonings by hundreds of miles, and all thought that the last day had come. The members of the great sect spent their days and nights in prayer in the open country. Strange to say, they did not feel many bad effects from the changes that were taking place. They felt in most cases stronger and better than ever they did. They saw the citizens and non-believers succumb in thousands; they tried to help them, but it was useless, all died. The very animals gave way, horses, cattle, sheep, birds, and vermin seemed to sicken and die. The sights by which the survivors were surrounded were terrible to look on, there was nothing but ruins, death and corruption. The cities were huge charnel pits. Dead cattle lay in every direction over the land, and but few animals survived the general destruction. The courses of rivers were in many parts of the world changed; the sea receded in some places, and encroached on the land in others. At last, the comet began to recede; the fight was over; the earth gradually regained its normal speed, and in about three months it was found to have made up its lost diurnal velocity, and began to accomplish its revolution in twenty-four hours by the chronometers. But what extraordinary changes had taken place. There was not a single city standing. It was found that the British Channel now occupied the latitude of the south of France; Spain was where north Africa used to be; the Arctic Ocean was free from ice; and there was now a navigable water passage around the north of Canada. Fresh reports were coming in daily from survivors by the cables that had escaped injury. Australia was now hundreds of miles further south, and its southern portion was visited by snow storms. Astronomers were busy taking observations all over the world; and it was proved beyond a doubt that owing to the attraction of the comet the earth's axis had permanently shifted. The ice-clad northern seas and lands were free from ice, it had drifted down the Atlantic, and melting, was dissipated. A new frozen region was forming at the earth's new axis, but the strangest thing of all was the change of atmosphere. It was found that its component parts were quite different, being now composed of new life-sustaining gases on which man could live, but it was very destructive to iron and steel. This at once explained the cause of the plague amongst the free eaters and drinkers. Their lungs not having been accustomed, as were those of the great sect, to gather support from the air, could not inhale or utilize these stronger life-sustaining gases; while they imparted life and vigour to our sect, to the rest of the world's inhabitants they acted as a slow poison. Then in the confusion of that terrible period of suspense, the non-believers also suffered terribly for the want of proper food; whereas in the case of the believers the simplest kind of food sufficed to keep them in life, and very little of it. This amount of food was gradually reduced as time went on, until, as you see, my son, we can now live on our life-giving atmosphere alone, and enjoy strength and happiness without any food and but little water. Can you now understand the present state of things? Can you now understand why all cities are ruined, and deserted; why we abhor and avoid them? Can you now understand why iron and steel have become things of the past?

"You may not yet see all this as we see it, my son, but you will soon be able to do so. Iron and steel are of no use now; the corrosive power of our atmosphere is so great, that the heaviest and strongest structure if made of these metals would soon be eaten away. The great war ships of the ancients and their great merchant fleets soon became useless by corrosion. This was well, because we now have no use for them. We do not require them to carry food, having no need of it. We do not want them for carrying fuel, having no use for it. All we now require is clothing, and this is of the simplest kind. As previously explained to you, all our sea and aerial fleets are constructed of the metal you know as aluminium, which is light and strong; and it is to be had in every country where you understand its manufacture.

"Have you ever reflected or thought since you have been with us what a horrible people you used to be? Think of the terrible things you did. Think of a people that would be base enough to defile their mouths with the flesh of the lower animals, flesh that must turn to corruption. The bare idea of this barbarous custom causes me to shudder." I here could not help asking how it was that the people of the present day retained their teeth when they could have no possible use for them. I had often remarked to myself what lovely white teeth they had. The Recorder remarked:—

"This is a pertinent question, my son, and shows me that you are possessed of considerable reasoning power. The fact is that we have no teeth of our own; they are all artificial, look here," he said, and putting his hand to his mouth he took out a complete set of teeth, and showed them to me, saying, after he replaced them: "A number of generations having lived without food, nature saw that we had no use for teeth, and caused them gradually to disappear. The consequence was that our mouths closed up very much, and we could not speak fluently, so we were obliged to use false teeth. The ladies, strange to say, were the leaders in this fashion, and we now feel obliged to them, as the faculty of speech is of great value to us." I here mentioned that while they were far advanced in many things, I had seen nothing that resembled the phonograph or speech registering and re-uttering machine.

"No," he said, "we do not wish to encourage such inventions as these, they are only fit for the uneducated who can neither read nor speak themselves. We want our people to be fluent writers, brilliant musicians, and fluent speakers. We have a duty to perform, and that is to keep them occupied and educated. If we were to do away with the art of writing and encouraged such inventions as these, we have proved by experience that the people who depend on them get too lazy to learn. Again, people that are lazy get selfish, and a selfish-minded man or woman is an abomination. Selfishness is a sin we use all our power and will to stamp out from our midst, as a sin not worthy of our manhood, a sin that would degrade us, were it allowed, below the level of humanity, whose greatest function is, and must ever be, to live for the good of others and not for self's selfish ends, at least, if we wish to be happy."

PART XIII.

AFTER the Recorder's hurried explanation of what had taken place since my day, I could now realize the cause of many things that were a continual puzzle to me during my first lifetime. I had read many books in days long past trying to explain the causes of the disappearance of ice in various parts of the world. I had read that there were in prehistoric days what were termed by philosophers the ice ages, and the boulder age. Now none of the arguments that were put forward in these books were to my mind satisfactory. We were told that at one time Great Britain, and in fact the north of Europe, must have been covered with great fields of ice, and we were told that, in the Arctic Regions, there were evidences discovered of the existence at some pre-historic date of tropical forests and vegetation. Now, how had this ice disappeared, and how had this tropical vegetation existed in a place that is now covered with perpetual snow?

The Recorder's revelations about the effect of the comet "Baria" on the earth, to my mind explains the whole question. At some period, before the creation of man, probably this same comet had come close to this planet, and so influenced it by attraction as to cause it to shift its axis in the same way as the Recorder described as having taken place in later days. Then the ice that covered the land would gradually melt and slide down the sides of the hills and valleys, forming the serrated ice cuts that we saw traces of all over the country in my day. Possibly at one time Great Britain was the North Pole, and possibly the present North Pole was at some still earlier date in the tropics. This would surely be a natural way to account for the marks of ice in Britain, and for tropical vegetation in the Arctic Regions.

Possibly, after a lapse of tens of thousands of years, that comet will return after travelling in interminable space and attract the earth still further round, and so the shifting scene will go on for ages and ages as endless as the space the comet has retired into.

With such thoughts as these I beguiled many hours while the ladies were busy. I seemed to be the only idle person in the kingdom; and I often wished I had had some occupation, I felt so like a pet dog that was made much of, but was absolutely of no use except for the amusement of those around. For one who used to take a leading part in his country's affairs, and who was considered a man of some parts, the position I now occupied was to me a mean one. I wished I could do something, but what could I do? The merest child knew more than I knew. I chafed and grumbled to myself, but what was the use? I could not help my position, so must put up with it. I therefore determined to be as happy as I could. I can't say how long I had been residing with the Recorder; but as far as I could put days together, I made it out to be about three months. I had been able to pick up many words of the modern English language. I was thrown very much into the company of the Recorder's daughter, and I must say I by no means objected to this. I told her all about the world as I knew it, and in return she told me much about the world as it was. She instructed me in modern English; and I soon began to understand the construction of this language, that now was universal. She told me her name was *Meda:* I thought this a very sweet name. We used to take one another's hands and flit about in playful joy; and when our hands were thus united, the power, or spirit, or life, or love, or whatever it was, used to flow from one to the other. It appeared as if one's energy passed from one, going into the other, and there mixing with the other's life, or spirit, or love, then flowing back again, amalgamated. Dear reader, how can I illustrate this feeling? It was very pleasant; yes, I have it! It was like the sand flowing from one end of an hourglass to the other; when all had flowed in, the glass appeared to turn of itself, and the sand began to flow back again. So it was when I held Meda by the hand; we were very happy, and she was beautiful, yes, beautiful both in mind and body. The Recorder and his wife must have seen that we were getting fond of one another; and they certainly never discouraged us. We began to live, as it were, in a land of perfect bliss. I told her my name was Kenneth: and we now addressed one another as Meda and Kenneth. The fact is, dear reader, we were in love. I forgot all about my previous self and previous life; I saw nothing that was strange around me now; I could only see one being clearly, and that was Meda, my own, my dearest, my beloved Meda, a very angel of beauty, an angel of intelligence, an angel of affection, love so sincere, love so truly love, love so pure and so intense, that my soul, my body, my very existence, was wrapt up in her. I felt, I knew, that this feeling was mutual, but I feared to ask her; I lived in such bliss and happiness that I dreaded to do anything to disturb it. I did not know the modern customs or mode of lovemaking, so thought it better to wait and not run any risk of endangering my prospects of years and years of pleasure by imprudent haste. Haste, that might destroy an intensity of sublime happiness that mortal rarely enjoys; haste, that might sever a chord of love that could not be re-united; haste, that might for ever and ever render two lives bound up in each other miserable.

So we continued to enjoy each other's company undisturbed, unopposed, and apparently unheeded. Meda's sympathies were my sympathies, Meda's joys were my joys. I was going to say that Meda's sorrows were my sorrows; but, now that I think of it, Meda had never known what sorrow was. Could we but have divined what was in store for us? Could we but have known in time the great calamity that was hanging, ay, thickening over us, then would we have shunned one another, as we would have shunned that king of darkness that destroys all peace and all happiness by his vile machinations, that are as insidious and as penetrating as the musk-rat's odour. But, alas! such was not to be. The inevitable must, must have its way. We lived on in love that was to be rudely cast aside; we lived in a holy, sincere trust in one another, that must be rent in twain: we lived, we joyed, we breathed, as if we were one being, one existence, one life, and one soul. Yet all this was to be broken in shreds, all was to be crushed to the veriest atoms, and these atoms the veriest concentration of misery. How long we lived in this Elysium of quiet joy: how long we continued this commune of souls; how long we remained as it were one being, in harmony of thought, in harmony of action, and in harmony of desire, I know not. Day seemed to blend into day, week seemed to blend into week, month into month, and year into year, and still we continued to love and to be loved by all around. The Recorder and his wife gave us every encouragement. I felt that we must be united; I felt that I had gained the love, the true, devoted, yes, the sincere, and loving love, of the most perfect and pure being that had ever been created. I declared my love: I was accepted. I spoke to her father and mother, and they gave their consent. The elders of the people were told, and all approved of Meda's selection. At first they objected on the plea that I was not equal to Meda in education; but my great knowledge of ancient history was allowed to place me on an equality with Meda, and this difficulty was overcome. The marriage day was fixed. The elders assembled; young maidens gathered from far and near. Great rejoicings were to take place on our marriage day! This day came about, and it was the first day of May. I felt the old Scotch superstition against marriages in May strong in my heart. I mentioned my fears and objections to the Recorder, and requested him to have the day altered to a day in June. But he said:—

"My son, these are silly, old world, notions that are only the outcome of superstition and ignorance; an ignorance that was the bane and the curse of past generations; an ignorance that wise people have rooted out thousands of years ago; an ignorance that must never again be tolerated, as all such superstitions are but an insult to intellectual refinement and knowledge."

Our marriage day came. We were to be married in a lovely country glen in the midst of nature. Trees, plants, flowers, would be all around us. Birds would sing songs of joy; butterflies would haunt the scene; all was to be beautiful; nature crowning the union of nature in the union of God's greatest masterpiece—two intellectual beings. All the time I had been in this land of intellectual pleasure and joy, I had never been able to see a marriage; but some of my friends had explained to me the nature of the ceremony, which varied with the intellectual standing of the bride and bridegroom. The Recorder being of very high standing, and his daughter's mental attainments being of the very highest rank, her marriage was to be a splendid pageant. For two days prior to our marriage, I was not allowed to see my bride; she stayed alone in her room, preparing her mind for the change that was about to take place in her life.

During these two days, I felt perfectly miserable; every doubt, every fear, that I could conjure up, seemed to come uppermost and torment me, but at last all this came to an end. On the morning of my marriage twelve young men in complete new costumes made of the finest white silk came to me, and led me away to the scene of the ceremony. What a sight there awaited me! Thousands of people lined the sides of the glen. In the centre was a group of elders. At the opposite end of the valley to that at which my party was standing, I saw a procession of young girls coming slowly along. Now they stop and form into two great groups with a space between them, and then I saw that there was a similar group of young men on either side of me. Now I noticed that all were looking towards the far end of the valley. Presently the Recorder and his wife joined the elders in the centre of the glen. At a signal from the elders the whole multitude sang softly in the most beautiful harmony, a melody that was more like the melody of saints than that of ordinary mortals. The music seemed to come from their very souls; it was at one moment like a gentle, refreshing shower, that pattered on the leaves; then, the rain would clear away, and bright rays of soft, genial, sunshine would break as it were through clouds, lighting the whole scene with joyfulness. Then, it would come on again with a sweet, rolling, rippling sound, gliding softly with quivering intonations that seemed to strike on the ear with a cushioned re-echoing of melodious sympathy, which could not fail to penetrate the hardest and most cruel heart, melting its flinty cells into sympathetic love strains laden with condescension, humility, and feeling for others.

Birds were flying about in sportive joy, and the butterflies with their gem-like wings fluttered over the entire glen. Truly it was a scene of beauty never to be forgotten, so long as memory recalls the incidents of the past. Presently the melody ceased and the music became measured in its time. I was told to advance towards the elders. I now saw my bride advancing from the other end of the glen, accompanied by about one hundred maidens, all clad in white and adorned with flowers, singing and waving green branches. My male friends joined in the song, and advancing we soon reached the group of elders, my bride and her maidens coming up at the same time. Her bearing was majestic, her face was beaming with pleasure, her eyes sparkled with animation. I was fascinated; I could see none but Meda; I could hear nothing but her voice; all else after her arrival appeared to me a piece of dumb show. I saw people all around me; I heard a confusion of voices; I was conscious that a ceremony had been gone through; and I knew that this ceremony was our marriage. I remember having made some eloquent oration. I remember the elders laying their hands on us. But all was so confused, so mixed up in my mind, that for me to describe the details of the ceremony would be simply impossible. All I knew was that my Meda was my own, my very own wife; I knew that I felt the happiest and the proudest man on earth. I knew that a little modest villa was allotted to us. I felt a king amongst men, knowing as I did, that I had secured the queen of women.

We lived in our little house for some months in the most supreme happiness, Meda devoting her time to instructing me in modern history, in modern languages, in modern art, and in music. Her love and devotion made me an apt pupil. How sweet is that instruction that is breathed to you as it were, wrapped in love. Each word, each idea, each thought, is clad with a pleasure that makes all sweet and acceptable. No matter how the subjects may differ, no matter how the ideas may vary, no matter even if they be antagonistic, if they are but set in loving kindness they will be like a bouquet of flowers, all of distinct families, all of different colours, and perfumes, yet all individually and collectively beautiful, sweet, and pure.

When Meda had instructed me in many things that were modern, and therefore to me strange, she began to look further afield for information. The time that was allowed for lovers' idleness was drawing to a close, and we must both soon begin to work for the State. I was promised by the Recorder a long journey as a delegate to various parts of our empire; part of the journey was to be performed in aerial, and part in naval vessels. Meda was to go with me. With all these treats in store, we looked forward to a long and happy life together, but alas! this was not to be. A blow was to be dealt to this happiness, and the hour was at hand. To me this subject is one of terror; would that I could avoid it, would that I could erase it from my memory, but such cannot be; it is burned into memory's register like the inscription that is burned into china; you may break the china into pieces, but those will still retain their mark to the end.

The terrible catastrophe of our separation came about in this way:—I told you, dear reader, that after a sojourn for many months with this strange people I got accustomed to their ways, and gradually forgot my past history. The things that happened to me in my previous state became as a blank in my mind, but, after my marriage, my memory of my own doings seemed to come back—doubtless brightened by the many questions that Meda put to me. I was now able to tell many tales and describe many incidents that had taken place in my previous life. I had out of modesty avoided relating anything about my own doings, nor had I said anything about my family, or about my previous marriage with my well-beloved Mary, who was now but dust. I loved all as dearly as man could love them, but with a lapse of over three thousand years, what was the use of thinking of them? Their very dust would by this time be scattered to the four quarters of the globe; the gases of which they were largely formed, must have passed through millions of other mortals and now would be lost to all. The identity of all I loved had fled, and I alone was revived as it were from death. I supposed, and made myself believe, it must be for some good end, and that end was my union with Meda. It so happened that Meda was in the habit of inviting a number of the elders, male and female, to hear my stories of the past, and I had explained much that had taken place in my day to them. On one occasion there was a very old lady in the company, and she, though perhaps innocently, was the cause of all my sorrow.

Women are, I verily believe, at the root of all mischief; had this old hag held her tongue or had she stayed away, I might never have got into the trouble I did.

She said to me: "Young man, I notice in all you relate that you have always avoided the part you yourself took in the past history of our nation. Why is this? Are you ashamed of what you have done, or is it modesty?"

I said that in the times in which I had lived a man who was continually speaking of himself and his doings was called an egotist, and was despised. We used in those days to make it a rule therefore, to keep silence as to our own doings, allowing others to speak for us.

"But," she said, "you are here alone, we can get none other to speak and tell us about your actions, so you must speak for yourself." All the rest joined with her, and as Meda added her request to that of the others, I consented. Had I but known the result that my simple narrative brought about, I would rather a hundred times have had my tongue cut out and thrown to the dogs (had there been any,) than have uttered a word.

I told them where I was born. I told them about my much beloved father and mother, and I moved them almost to tears when I described with all the fervour of my gratitude my mother's loving care for me; I told them how she gave up every pleasure to gratify mine; I told them how she had laboured and toiled after my father's death to provide that food, which in those days was necessary for my sustenance; how she instilled pure, honourable, and holy thoughts into my mind; how she had nursed me through sickness; and how she had cheered me in sorrow; how she had lived; how she had died in peace, in trust, and in confident faith in the future. Through all this history I was listened to with respect, nay, I might say, if I were to judge by their rapt attention, I was listened to with admiration.

But I went on and told them that after my mother's death I felt very lonely, and began to look out for a suitable companion to take my mother's place in my affections. I found one in my Mary, I wooed, I won her; we were married and had a family. When I pronounced the word "married," and said I had a family, I heard a terrible scream, and looking in the direction of the sound I saw my Meda stretched on the floor, looking like a corpse. I rushed towards her to lift her, but the whole company rose and flew at me, as one, and laying hold of me dragged me away from my darling when she was so ill. They glared at me saying :—

"Cruel, deceitful man, you have ruined the life of the most respected and honoured of our daughters; but your infamy will have its reward, your punishment will be terrible—so terrible, that even though we despise you, we sorrow for you."

Saying this, they took me forcibly out of my own home and spirited me away into a dungeon, as they said, to await my trial.

PART XIV.

HOW I wondered, as I sat in my dark room, what I could have done to deserve such barbarous treatment; it was beyond my comprehension to understand why a people could turn on me as it were with one will, at the same moment, and snatch me away from my poor wife who evidently was very ill. I had struggled hard to get to her, but the more I fought the more I was resisted. Had I been an unclean thing that carried pestilence with it, I could not have been resisted more fiercely. I felt terribly cast down; the depths of my misery were greater than I can describe, far, far greater than I had ever experienced during all the sorrows and trials of my previous life.

It was strange that the joys and pleasureable feelings of this intellectual people were so intense. Did enlightenment add to the intensity of enjoyment? And did it also add to the intensity of sorrow? Yes, I fully believe it did. The more intellectual man or woman is, the more acute are their joys and their sorrows, and the more acutely they feel pain. The lower animals do not suffer the same bodily pain that men do, nor do the lower or uneducated mortals experience the intensity of pleasure, or the same intensity of pain as the educated and refined. All great pleasures are, as it were, balanced by proportionably great sorrows. Possibly this is intended to be so, and no doubt it is ordained for the best. The solitude of my cell caused me to ruminate over the last hours I spent in my own home. I went over every word I had said until I came to the statement I had made regarding my marriage and my family. This portion of my narrative I repeated over and over again to myself, when, suddenly, it flashed upon me that this was the cause of the whole commotion. I now remembered that one of the laws of this people was that no man could marry a second time, even after his wife's death, but here I was married a second time; and I did not know whether my dear old Mary lived or not. Here was I married again after more than three thousand years. I had defiled, I had degraded the finest creature God had ever made, and I had forgotten one of the best of creatures, who, in the old world days, I dearly loved. I had allowed my Mary's memory to die and be a blank to me. I felt that I was one of the greatest monsters in the world; I lay down and rolled about on the dark, damp floor; I cared not what they would do with me now. I prayed that I might be killed to put me out of this mental torture; but the release from life to death was not for me, I was too vile for this.

I think I must have been two days in confinement, when I was taken from my cell. I was led into a room, at one end of which were seated three judges (the same that I had seen when with the Recorder). A clerk sat at a table under them, and was arranging tablets when I entered. At the side of the table opposite to me, sat my late friend, the Recorder. I was told to be seated opposite to him. The presiding judge said :—" Proceed with the case."

The Recorder stood up immediately and opened his case in a most eloquent speech that was very moderate in its tone, in fact, I felt that he was performing a duty that he would have avoided if it were possible : I felt that he was, while accusing me of a horrible crime—as sorry for me as he was for his daughter. He tried to make his charge against me as leniently as he could. To go over all he said in support of the laws of his nation would be more than I could do, and more, dear reader, than you could stand. Suffice it to say that I was accused of what, in the eyes of this people, was the most heinous of heinous crimes, and that was—having married a second time. He said that he himself was much to blame as he had never asked me had I been married, but he added, as an excuse for his neglect, "How could I think that one so young had been married before ?" (I did not quite see the force of this argument, as I was forty years old.) He said, to further excuse himself; "I have been much in this young man's company, and while in his company I have constantly read his thoughts, and can testify that he never once thought of his first wife while in my company." He explained that his daughter was ruined for life, and degraded in the eyes of the people. She was now a defiled woman. His sorrow and grief were great—great indeed—but his belief in a divine Providence caused him to think that some good might yet come out of this terrible sorrow; and he said further, "I loved this stranger who had come among us; I was pleased with his intelligence, besides believing that my daughter's marriage with him would be for the good of the people, because of the great distance in time of the relationship between them, dating back as it does over 3000 years. I feel for this man, knowing as I do that he was ignorant of the law of our people that forbids any man to be married a second time."

He now sat down, and the President of the court asked me had I anything to say in my defence. I stood up and said, that no one could be more grieved at what had taken place than I was, no one could be more cast down than I was, no one was more desirous to make reparation for my unconscious mistake, my unknown sin, than I was. If there had been any means of making this reparation I would make any sacrifice even with my life, to restore Meda to the happiness that she had enjoyed before she knew me. I expressed my gratitude to the Recorder for the kind and moderate way in which he had stated his case against me. But, I said, I would not be honest if I allowed the court to think that I was not conscious that it was against the laws of this country for a man to marry a second time. I had heard that such was the law from the Recorder or some one else. "But, at the same time," I said, "I feel perfectly innocent of having done anything wrong, as when wooing and gaining the affections of this gentleman's daughter, I was for the time oblivious of all my previous life's history. I forgot that I had existed before; I forgot that I had ever had wife or child—all was an utter blank to me; my memory of the past had, for the time, flown; nor did it return until some months after my marriage. And even when memory returned to me, I saw no harm in my second marriage after a lapse of over three thousand years. My first wife and my family and their descendants for generations and generations must have returned to the gases and to the dust from which they were made. Nor had my thoughts or my feelings any objections to second marriages, as such was in accordance with the laws and customs of my time."

I appealed with all my soul's fervour to the court to do what was most likely, in their opinion, to restore my dearly beloved Meda to happiness and social position. If anything, I said, that can be done to me, even unto my death, will help her, let it be done. I saw that my appeal touched the hearts of all in the court; I saw that many were moved to tears; but I also saw in the solemn, thoughtful faces of my judges that my fate was sealed.

The President asked the Recorder had he anything further to say. The Recorder immediately rose, and with a quivering voice said:

"My Lords,—I would not for worlds ask you to evade the laws of our nation, particularly as regards this terrible crime; I know that this man has acted against the law while unconscious that he was doing so; and I believe all he has stated to be true. I know he is desirous from his heart to repair the damage that he has thus unconsciously done to my much beloved daughter, my only child. In your consideration of your verdict, I would therefore pray of you to be as lenient to him as the laws of our country will permit. Remember that the customs of his people allowed and encouraged the action that he has been guilty of; remember his inexperience, and act towards him, in considering his sentence, with mercy."

I was now asked if I had anything further to say in reply. I bowed towards the President and said, "No."

The judges then retired to consider their verdict. After an absence, that to me appeared like ages, they returned, and after being seated, the President began :—

"Young man, we find you guilty of the gravest offence that it is possible for a man of our day to commit against our laws. It is an offence of such a serious nature that no woman dare mention it. By the laws of our country you are condemned by this court to float away into unmeasurable space. Where you will go to or what will become of you no man can tell. After considering your ignorance and your want of appreciation of the necessity of this law, and after making every allowance for you on these heads, the most we can do for you is to so far modify the usual conditions of this sentence, and order that you be provided with instruments, by means of which you can guide your course through space, so long as strength is left you. Whether or not this indulgence is of any value to you no one can tell. The sentence will be carried out the day after to-morrow in the presence of our people in order to show them the result that must follow any departure from the moral laws that are the outcome of intellect. The condemned may now be removed."

While the President was pronouncing my sentence, I sat and gazed at him stupefied with horror. My whole life's actions from my early babyhood's sins down to the present seemed to come before me with vivid distinctness. Every little petty sin that I had committed came before me with all its details and surroundings, the rapidity of their appearance and disappearance being something miraculous. I thought of how, as a child, I had deceived my dear, kind mother; I thought of how that father who had toiled and worked for me, had been often vexed and worried by me; I thought of my quarrels with my brothers and sisters. I remembered how at school I had deceived my masters; I remembered how I had used unfair means to advance my interests as an artist; I remembered some quarrels with my dear, first wife, Mary; I remembered that I had been often unjust to her, and had often given this kind, patient creature great pain; I remembered everything that could possibly tell against me; and all this life-like panorama seemed to flash through my brain in a moment. I tried to think that the crime I was convicted of, and sentenced for, was a terrible crime, but somehow I could not think it was a crime at all. I thought rather that I was sinned against and persecuted. In my agony when the sentence was pronounced, and when the President said I was to be removed, I rose to my feet and begged him to hear me before I left them for ever. To this request he acquiesced, but said, "You must be brief." I then began:—

"Mr. President, you have pronounced this terrible sentence on one who, in his own eyes, and in the eyes of Almighty God, is innocent of having committed any crime. To commit a crime surely you must allow that one must feel that he is doing something wrong. Had I been conversant with your laws, and had I knowingly wooed and won the affections of this lady with the knowledge that I was acting against your laws, then would I have been sinning, but acting as I did, without any consciousness of doing wrong, I hold that in the eyes of reason, in the eyes of common-sense, and in the eyes of unbiassed justice, I have committed no sin. I do not say this with any desire to evade the sentence that you have passed on me; but I say it to let you and your people know that I consider that you, in making an ignorant man amenable to laws that he did not know or understand, are committing an act of injustice that is unworthy of the intelligence that your nation is undoubtedly in possession of—an intelligence that is beyond all that it is possible for me to conceive, an intelligence that has astonished me beyond all measure. And, Mr. President, I would pray you in your great wisdom, should any such similar case as mine ever come before you, to think of the remarks that one so humble as I am in point of intellect and intelligence has ventured to make. But, Mr. President, when I think of the punishment itself I am astonished that a people of such culture could be so intellectually refined in their cruelty as to invent this most awful, this most cruel means of torturing a fellow-creature. Why can you not kill outright? Why can you not spill my heart's blood? Why can you not shred my flesh, and grind my bones to atoms, rather than let a living, conscious creature float away, away to that awful desert of space that is so vast, that the greatest and the most enlightened mind among you cannot conceive where it begins, and knows not where it ends? Think but of the thoughts of your victim, who will float about for years and years, unable to live as he should live, yet unable to die. And while you are not asked to alter your laws for one so mean and humble as I am, I pray that in justice to yourselves, as a nation, you will obliterate this terribly cruel punishment from your so-called book of justice which is alike a disgrace to humanity, and to the intelligence with which humanity has been endowed by the Creator.

"Now, Mr. President, I will conclude. I do not know if your laws will allow me to see my wife before I float away, but should this be denied me, or should the lady object from feelings that may in her be justified according to her light, I wish, if it be not permitted, that this court will kindly convey to her my regret, my sincere regret for all that has taken place. Tell her that all I have done was done with the purest and most loving intentions towards her, and that if I have erred (and this, according to my light, which is perhaps but a dim and flickering one, I have not), it has been through inexperience and ignorance that I have had no means of enlightening. I have now said all that I have to say, and must thank you, Mr. President, along with your colleagues, for the patient hearing you have given me."

As I sat down I could notice that all in the court were much affected by my short speech. The judges coughed, and looked at one another until at last the President pulled himself together, and casting all sympathy from him, he spoke, simply saying :—

"Young man, we are sorry for you. You are a man of wonderful refinement of thought and feeling considering the antiquity of your origin, yet we can make no more distinction in your case than in that of any other culprit; our forefathers have made, and we have carried out this law for over six hundred years. We have found it to be beneficial to the morality of our people, and while perhaps it is, as you have described it, refined in its cruelty, it is the law and as such we respect it. Guards, remove the prisoner."

I was now taken back to my dungeon to await my fate.

After I was left alone, I lay down on the floor and slept the sleep of the exhausted. What hour it was when I awoke, I cannot tell; but I found the dungeon lighted with a glow lamp, and five men of the guide type sitting around me. After I awoke, I continued to look at them with apathetic indifference. I wondered what they were in my company for; but did not trouble to ask. I noticed that they had several curious-looking instruments with them, and it passed through my mind that these might be instruments of torture, but even to this I was indifferent. At last, one who seemed to be the chief amongst them, came to me, and said in Latin, "Arise, I wish to instruct you in the use of these instruments before you take them away with you as your sole and only friends. They are friends that will be true to you for evermore." I told him not to trouble me, but he persisted, and for the sake of getting rid of him, I stood up.

Then he said:—"I hold a most honourable and responsible position in the State, I am chief executioner. Although I do not cut off heads nor yet hang culprits by the neck, as I am told the ancients did, I cut off their connection with the earth, as effectually as if I severed their vertebræ or closed their wind-pipes. My life is devoted to science—that glorious science that teaches men all things. Were you a learned and scientific man, I would give you quick despatch, you would go up like a rocket. In your case the court has given instructions that on account of the greatness of your ignorance, or as they put it, your having through ignorance committed a terrible sin, your punishment is not to be so great as it otherwise would have been. In fact, young man, you must be a great favourite with the judges, as they have instructed me to supply you with the means of guiding yourself in the air and through space, and it is for the purpose of instructing you in the use of certain instruments that I am here with my assistants. Now, hurry up! we have not long to devote to you, as time flies, do what we will to control its action."

I went to him. He first let me see what he termed the insulator. "The use of this instrument," he said, "is to destroy the earth's attraction." In a playful way, he continued:—"This is my axe, this is my rope," and he patted and fondled it as if it were some living pet, for which he had a great affection. "Now, culprit, I will give you a practical illustration of its use." So saying, he took the instrument, which resembled a great metallic belt, and secured it around my waist by means of a spring and lock, his assistants holding me all the time. "Now," he said, "I will secure this string to your feet, and when you are ready we will pass one end of it through this ring which is secured to the floor. In a little I am going to turn on the exciter, and when this is done you will find that you will ascend. Now, I will provide you with guiding power and explain its use;" and so saying, he fastened two metallic strings to my belt, one on the right hand side, and the other to the left hand side. These strings were about a yard long, and one end was provided with a bracelet having a valve case or ball about two-and-a-half inches in diameter secured to it. He clasped the bracelets around my wrists so that one of the balls lay in the palm of each hand. I noticed that each ball was provided with two buttons placed in such a position as to allow the fingers when closed to press on one or other or both of them. My instructor said:—"No doubt you understand all about these lines of force, seeing that you are a friend of the Recorder. Well, if you press the top button on the left hand globe you will go to the left; and if you press the top button on the right hand ball you will go to the right, at the angles of the lines of force in whatever altitude you may be in. If you wish to steer a mid-course, then press both buttons in both balls equally, and you can deviate your course, more or less, from one side to the other by more or less pressing the buttons. Although this dungeon is not very high, you will be able to put my instructions to a practical test." He took the string he had previously fastened to my feet, and passing it through a bronze ring in the floor, secured it; then he went to my back and said, "I am now going to excite your girdle." I felt him moving some kind of a handle at my back, calling at the same time to his assistants to let me go; they did so, and immediately I sprang as it were into the air, the string bringing me to an anchor, with a jerk that showed the force with which I had ascended. I did not rest vertically, but I found that I was held by the string at an angle to the floor, as if I were pulled by the heels by some moving body. He now told me to press the right hand button, and in doing so, I veered around to the right, and when I pressed the left hand I veered to the left. I also noticed that as I pressed the buttons the strain on my anchorage became greater, until my ancles seemed almost cut through; so I at once desisted, as I thought my feet would be cut off by the cord. I was now at such an angle to the ground that my face nearly touched it, and there was a rush of something past me that made me feel as though I was standing in a hurricane. Possibly it was the effect of the passing lines of force by which I was now influenced. Speed of thought enabled me to take in the whole situation. This girdle of mine being excited by turning the handle, had destroyed the force of gravity, and this force being destroyed, I was trying to get away from the earth, while I at the same time was being dragged by the string attached to the ring in the floor, at a tremendous speed by the earth's motion. Had the string broken I would of a certainty have been smashed to atoms against the roof or walls of the dungeon; and I could see that when I pressed the buttons, I brought the lines of force into play, and was drawn by this mysterious power in an opposite direction to the earth's rotation, which added to the strain on the string. I begged to be taken down, and this curious specimen of an executioner said, "Oh yes! certainly, friend; I can do that now, as such are my instructions; but to-morrow I will let you loose for ever and ever, in the same way as I have released a number of criminals before. You see we have no room here for people who disrespect or disobey our just and wise laws. We don't allow even their bones or ashes to remain to pollute the earth." He turned the handle in my girdle again, and I fell flat on the floor, bruising my face and chest against it; but after this first taste of the terrible punishment that was in store for me, I wished that I had been killed outright by the fall. The executioner now removed his ingenious but horrible apparatus from me, and carried it away with him, leaving two of his assistants in charge. I tried to pass away the time by speaking to these creatures, but this was a hopeless task. They had but few ideas except about executions; this evidently was their specialty, and they stuck to it.

Broken-hearted, and worn out in mind and in body, and in very soul, I retired to a corner of the dungeon, and threw myself down on the floor, and there I started for the hundredth time to try and unravel the mystery of my position. My recollections of my first life, my first wife, and my children, were all mixed up in a mysterious jumble with modern habits and customs, modern language, music, art, and science. Where one begun or the other ended, or how I got mixed with both I could not tell; all I knew was that I was miserable, yes, utterly miserable. I prayed to God to save me from a continuance of this horrible trial, or I should go mad. How my brain stood it all, I can never explain. I was racked, worn, and miserable in mind, still I often thought of Meda. I never thought ill of her, and seemed to mix her with my earliest life. I thought I had known her as a child; I thought she was my Mary, my first wife; I could not disassociate her from every incident in my many troubles. Sleep I could not, rest I could not, but lay on the floor in the veriest and most abject misery, through the long dreary hours of waiting. Had I been condemned to death, I should have prized every moment; but being condemned to a long weary life floating about in endless space, I moaned aloud at the duration of time. At times a moment of calm would come; and then I would begin to regret that I had so soon got into this trouble which compelled me to leave the modern world before I had visited all the great seats of intelligence in America, Australia, Africa, India, and Europe. I had at one time lived in the fond hope that I should have a voyage in those wonderful aerial and naval vessels along with Meda; I had hoped to be able to study modern navigation; I had hoped to be able to investigate the principles of the mysterious forces that man had now summoned to his aid. I felt I had lost the chance of making use of all the valuable opportunities that I expected to have. And yet it was not my fault; it was the fault of that miserable hag of a woman who would insist on making me speak of myself. I believed she was a fiend in woman's clothing, sent to lead me to ruin by her master, the devil. I cried out in agony:—

"Oh Lord! excuse my presumption, but why do you allow these fiends to enter into the form of women and tempt us and lead us astray?" I no sooner had said this than I felt full of remorse. Why should I blame anyone more than myself? Why should men blame women? Are they not worse, yes, far worse themselves?

But I was in such a highly strung, nervous and exhausted state that I was not answerable for what I thought, said, or did. I remember not what took place after this, until I was led to my execution. I must have swooned away.

PART XV.

THE next thing that I recollect was being conscious of being led out of the dungeon, and taken away to a hill. Around the top of the hill was a multitude of men, in the centre of which was a number of elders who formed a ring on the most elevated portion of the ground. I was taken into the centre of the ring of elders, amongst whom I now noticed the Recorder, looking years older than when I saw him last. He was bowed down with grief for me; yet I could see that while he loved and grieved for me; and while he loved his daughter, his love and respect for his duty to the laws of his country were greater, yes, far greater than any considerations such as these. I felt my respect for this large-minded, noble, yet modest man growing greater and greater; I felt that in him, at least, was engrafted a noble, generous and right-minded nature, that one must respect, that one must admire, that one must love. The sight of his sorrow caused me to cast my dejection aside. I tried to look cheerful to cheer him; I tried to look happy to make him happy.

An elder came up to me and said: "Young man, have you any further reasons to bring forward as to why your sentence should not be carried out? You have been tried before our judges, and they have found you guilty according to the laws of our people."

I replied: "Sir, I feel that I am according to yours laws found guilty of a great crime, and I feel, looking at my sentence from your point of view, that it is a just one. I blame no one in this country for what has taken place, nor can I blame myself. What I have done, has been done in ignorance; and I feel that while it is a transgression in the eyes of your laws, it is not a sin in the eyes of the great Creator, to whom all owe their being."

"Now," he said, "your sentence must be carried out; are you prepared?"

I replied, "I am ready.—Am I to be allowed to see my wife before I leave?"

He said: "The law forbids any women to be present at such scenes as this."

"Then," I said, "bring it to a close with all speed."

The executioner now advanced towards me, putting on the same apparatus that I had on before, but no cord was tied to my feet this time. His four assistants laid hold of me, and at a word from the leading elder, he turned the handle of the exciter, and I darted into the air, the earth whirling past me at the rate of a thousand miles per hour. At first I was quite dazed, but gradually I began to regain consciousness, I saw land, and hills, and lakes, and valleys, and oceans passing beneath me in quick succession, and gradually growing more and more indistinct. Sometimes I was lost in clouds; sometimes I was in pure, pure atmosphere; I seemed to float onward and upwards. At times I imagined that some one situated like myself followed in my path, but I could not turn round to see if such was the case, as I had forgotten for the time the executioner's instructions, so I just floated on and on through space. I experienced no pain, no thirst, no hunger, no pleasure. I lived as it were in space, devoid of all feeling. The night came on; I could now see no earth, but I saw stars innumerable,—such bright, such beautiful gems of the heavens. Was it possible that I should float away to one of these? Was it possible that I should find there another race, another people, more or perhaps less intellectual than those I had just left? With such thoughts my mind was filled, and with such thoughts passing through my brain I began while floating about to dose. I felt a pleasant, happy feeling of stupor coming over me. I roused myself however by a great effort, and seeing a figure floating before me some hundred yards ahead, I began to examine it. It was like the figure of an old man with a long flowing white beard that extended below his feet. Although it was now night, it was not quite dark; I could see distinctly all before me.

I did not seem to get any nearer to this figure, yet I must have floated about with it in view for some hours. Its hands were outstretched, and its fingers and the nails were of prodigious length, while the nails of its toes hung below the feet. I now began to remember the instructions given by the executioner as to the use and method of working the guiding apparatus; and my thoughts once started in this direction, all my instructions came to my memory in an instant. I remembered now his explanation about pressing the buttons of the right or left hand ball. I thought I should try pressing my right hand fingers on the buttons first. The moment I did this, I felt as if I had laid hold of an invisible rope travelling at a great speed. I was pulled away at an angle towards the right, and so fast was I moving that my body assumed a horizontal position. I was, as it were, flying forward. When I started, the figure was directly in front of me, but being drawn by this line of force towards the right, I passed at lightning speed to the right of the figure. I had hoped to be able to come up to it, and find out what kind of man it was, if man it could be called; but when I came near it, I had not the presence of mind to take my fingers off the buttons. When I was passing, however, I saw more clearly that the figure was truly that of an old man. He held out both his hands, as it were, to stop me, but I shot past out of his reach. I could see that his great gaunt limbs were quite naked; he had the same apparatus around his waist that I wore, but he evidently was not provided with any guiding power. I lifted my fingers off the buttons when I was well past him, and then came to a stop, assuming once again a vertical position. I tried several times to turn towards him, but this was impossible. Having overshot my mark, I could not now get any information from him; it was clear to me that I must wait for another chance meeting. So I touched the left hand buttons, and I sped away at an angle to the left; I then touched both, and I was drawn straight ahead.

I found considerable pleasure in experimenting with this mysterious power that pulled me about until I at last, by practice, became accustomed to its management, and could travel in any direction I liked within the angles of the lines of force. But this became very trying work; my arms felt as though they were drawn out of their sockets. I wished I could now meet another figure floating about, as I would be able to converse with it, if it spoke any language that I understood; but I had lost my chance, at least, for the present. I could see nothing but the stars and the moon that looked terribly bright and distinct; I imagined I saw a second moon below me, but its outline was only dimly bright. Could it be possible that this was the earth that I had left? If it was so, how could I ever get back to it again? Was I forever to float about in space like that poor desolate figure that I had passed? Would my beard grow like his and stream about me as his did? Would my limbs become gaunt? Would my eyes become fixed and glazed as his were?

Yes, such must be my miserable fate; I must float about in this terrible solitude for all time. Here my spirit rose in indignation for the hundredth time against this cruel punishment. Death by torture, death by burning, anything would be preferable to this. But I said to myself, I have one resource left, and that is the power of motion. I grieve to say that I tried to kill myself by this power. I clutched my right hand on the buttons and away I sped to the right; then I would clench the left hand buttons, and away I went to the left, diving and twisting from right to left and then from left to right; I would close both hands, and off I started straight ahead. I went on thus without ceasing for hours, until I became perfectly exhausted. I was unable to do anything now, so I stood at rest.

[I had now been many days sitting in Folingsby's garden, engaged in writing his adventures. As his health had not improved, I feared that the excitement of relating what he had seen in space would be too much for him. In fact, his wife had given me several scoldings, and she said that I was encouraging him to talk nonsense and injuring his health. I noticed also that when he came to relate what he saw in space, his manner quite changed, and he spoke like one in a dream, with his eyes fixed stedfastly, as if he saw all he described.

Although highly interested, I felt it my duty to Folingsby and his wife not to allow him to continue relating his floating experiences for the present, but rather encouraged him to keep them until he was quite well and strong. I at last got him persuaded to skip all this portion of his experiences, and to be content with relating how he got released from his curious position.]

"Well," he said, "I suppose I must jump to the conclusion, since you and Mary have conspired against me, and I am too weak to resist you. After floating about for months and months, and seeing many strange things, I felt one night as if I were half asleep and half awake. I thought I heard voices whispering: I thought I felt a kindly hand bathing my brow; and I thought some one was feeling my pulse. I heard a woman's voice say, 'Doctor, he is better; do say my darling is better.' And then I heard a strong, kindly voice say: 'Yes, the crisis is past, I can now give you some hope, but the greatest prudence must be exercised, a relapse would have terrible results. You must now go to bed, and leave the nurse to attend to the patient.'

"'But I cannot leave my darling, doctor,' the voice pleaded.

"'I insist on your doing so,' was the reply. And then I listened and thought I heard them retiring. Where had I heard that woman's voice before? It was quite familiar to me, I knew it; yes, it was my first dear wife Mary's voice. I was sure of this; how could it be, though? She has been dead more than three thousand years. What has become of me? No, it is not her voice. I tried to open my eyes; I did so with great difficulty. I looked around and saw I was in a room the exact counterpart of the one I had occupied in the latter days of my first life. Who was that dark man standing at the foot of the bed looking so grave? I knew his face. Yes, yes, that is good, kind, doctor Brown, that I knew of old, the same face. I tried to speak, but could not; I tried to move, but could not stir, I felt quite faint. The doctor came up to the head of the bed, and laid his hand on my forehead, saying:

"'Thank God, you are better, Folingsby; but you must be very prudent and do not speak on any account; you have had a terrible time of it. Take this.' He poured something down my throat from a drinking cup, and I again became unconscious.

"My next recollection of consciousness was a feeling of soreness and tiredness all over my body. My eyes were closed. I was trying to move myself, but I felt so worn-out, so tired, and so weak that I had not energy to do anything. My mouth was dry and hard; when I moved my tongue about, it seemed to rattle against my teeth. My very teeth appeared loose in my gums. I could not breathe through my nose, my head seemed stuffed up. What could it all mean? I had a distinct recollection of having revisited my old home, of having heard my first wife speak, of having seen my old doctor. What had come over me now? Had I gone away again on the lines of force? One time on the blue track, and another time on the red track, had I got away from my old home again, and jumped ahead three thousand years?

"I groaned aloud in perfect misery; and immediately a soft, gentle hand was placed on my brow, bathing it with perfume; then, drop by drop, moisture was let fall between my lips, but not a word was spoken. I moved my tongue now with greater freedom; it got gradually moist and pliable, and my teeth seemed to get more securely fixed. I could not speak, nor could I open my eyes, but my sense of hearing was most acute, and I was conscious that there was only one person in the room, and that that person was a woman. No hands save those of a woman could be so gentle and kindly as those hands were. They were not those kind of hands that are hard all over; hands that when they try to caress you, only dab at you or probe you, as if they were made of a combination of jointed bits of wood, without feeling or sense of touch. No, these were nice, soft, gentle, sympathetic hands; the fingers did not move in rows like a company of soldiers or the teeth of a rake. No, they moved individually, guided in the gentleness of their touch by the veriest love in sympathy with suffering. You must, dear reader, have had experience in hands. What a deal of character there is displayed by this member! I would know a gentle heart at once by a hand shaking. I don't care how big, how clumsy the hand is, if there is sympathy in the grip there is a sympathetic heart behind.

"As I lay in this weak but conscious state, I wondered who this could be that was attending to my wants with such gentle care. My first thought was of Meda; I thought she must have followed me up into the clouds and was now nursing me; but no, that was not the case, those hands were not hers. I began now to think of Meda. What a curious creature she was, with her large head, and big chest! How did I ever love her? What queer people I had been with! And how cruel they had been to me to send me off to the skies in the way they did! But, after all, I thought it was a good thing they did so, as it got me clear away from Meda. Oh, how cruel was this thought! Poor Meda! did she love me? I certainly loved her; but somehow I have changed. I wonder where I am?

"Then I began thinking of my early life, my first life, my first love, my Mary, my own wife! I tried several times to speak, but could not. The moisture was kindly and regularly applied to my lips; I got more strength; I managed to mutter the word 'Mary,' and to my great delight

I heard as in a whisper,—'Hush, love, your Mary is beside you.'

"What did it all mean? Had I not died? Had I not been born again more than three thousand years later? Had I not lived with the people of the future? Had I not been married a second time to Meda? Had these people not acted cruelly towards me? Had I not floated away into interminable space? And had I not seen terrible and interesting things there? How was it now that a voice said, 'Your Mary is beside you?' Was I dreaming? Was I mad? What was it? Yet those hands, that gentle, kindly sympathetic touch; yes, that was Mary's, my Mary's hand, I should know it amid a thousand. I again essayed to speak, and at last managed to say, 'My Mary, are you there?'

"'Yes, dear one, I am here, but oh, Kenneth darling, do be quiet. I will get such a scolding from the doctor if I speak or allow you to speak, so do be quiet, like a good, dear fellow.'

"I said, 'Give me your hand.' She placed her hand in mine, and then I knew it was not a dream; I knew that wherever I was, Mary was with me, in reality, in truth, yes, in very life; I felt happy, so truly happy, that my exhausted state mattered not to me now. I then said, 'Where am I, Mary?'

"'You are in your own room, in your own house, near your own garden, dear; but it is the middle of the night now, and all is darkness, and the fact is, Kenneth dear, you must go to sleep. I will not speak another word to you; it is, the doctor says, as much as your life is worth; there now.'

"I knew from experience that it was useless for me to say another word to Mary when she wound up with 'There now.' There was no use in trying to move her, so I tried to please her, and at last I fell into a gentle slumber, and did not awake again until the sun was shining brightly. Then I was able to open my eyes and examine my surroundings. I could not lift my head from my pillow I was so weak, but before me, asleep in an easy chair, was my Mary. But oh! how changed. Her face bore a worn-out expression; her cheeks, that I had known as blooming and fresh, were now thin and hollow; her whole figure seemed haggard and exhausted; her sleep seemed broken and restless. But although my mouth was dry and parched, I would not for all the water in the world have disturbed her, so I lay and watched and thought. I could hear the birds singing such lovely songs of love; ah! that I could but look out through the window and see them. I could hear the gentle breeze rustling amongst the trees. All seemed love; all seemed pleasure; all seemed happiness. At last Mary awoke, and starting up as if she had committed some sin, she came over to me, and seeing my eyes open she burst into tears, and stooping, kissed me. The hot tears I knew were not tears of sorrow, but tears of joy. I wept also; my very weakness and joy caused me to be overcome.

"It was three days after this that I got a short account of what had taken place. I had had a very serious illness that for a long time puzzled the doctor. I lay like one dead, so like, that at one time the doctor thought I was gone. This state of coma, it appears, lasted for five weeks; and the doctor told me that had it not been for the untiring care of my dear wife I could not have lived. For weeks and weeks she had sat up with me, day and night; all wondered that she stood this terrible fatigue, but her devoted loving devotion pulled me through. For my part I have never since been the same man. My conviction is that while my body lay in that state of coma my spirit has been away in the far future, gleaning information to lay before the people of 1888, a warning to them of what is to come.

"You have prevented me telling you what I saw while floating in space, but this will keep until I am stronger. I am glad I have been able to tell you what I have told, as it is a great relief to my mind."

FINIS.